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# CATHOLIC MIND

*March-April, 1957*

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# CATHOLIC MIND

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*The nuclear age has confronted us with a new equation—that between the immoral use of force and the destruction of all human security, even the fundamental security of life itself.*

## Morality and Security: The Forgotten Equation\*

HON. THOMAS E. MURRAY

*Member, U.S. Atomic Energy Commission*

THE CHRISTIAN effort at peace-making from its origin undertook the task of civilizing warfare. It set itself against pacifism—the notion that war is always immoral. But it set itself even more strongly against barbarism—the notion that the use of armed force is not subject to any moral restraints. Against these two extremes the tradition asserts that war can be a moral action, but only if it is limited in its purposes and methods by the norms of justice.

The fact today is that the Christian tradition of civilized warfare has been ruptured. The chief cause

of the rupture has been the doctrine of total war fought to total victory—the kind of victory that looks to the total ruin of the enemy nation. This doctrine of totalization of war represents a regression toward barbarism. It is contrary to the central assertion of the civilized tradition, that the aims of war are limited, and the use of force in war is likewise limited, not merely by political and military counsels of expediency, but primarily by the moral principle of justice.

I need not trace the history of the rupture of this civilized tradi-

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\*Address to the Catholic Association for International Peace, Washington, D.C., November 10, 1956.



tion; many of you doubtless know it better than I. The "patriotism" of the French Revolution gave birth to the concept of "the nation in arms," which led to the idea of universal military conscription. Our own Civil War foreshadowed the fatal notion that "victory" in war means "unconditional surrender." A further step toward the concept of total war to total victory was the rejection by the belligerent governments and peoples of Pope Benedict XV's proposals, made on August 1, 1917, for a negotiated peace.

The historically decisive stride in the same direction was taken in World War II by the inception of obliteration bombing. One purpose of this new kind of air attack was to terrorize the enemy civil population, in particular the industrial worker. The developing logic of total war showed itself in the disastrous announcement at Casablanca in 1943 that "unconditional surrender" was the war aim of the Allied Powers. The immoral decision that the civilian population has no claim to immunity from destruction in war was ratified, with most fearful effectiveness, by the unfortunate American decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Since World War II the technical possibilities for obliteration bombing have now become unlimited. The United States discovered the secret

of the hydrogen bomb; later the Soviet Union came upon the same secret. The significance of this technological achievement cannot be exaggerated. Weapons of war have moved up into a new order of magnitude. Now the barbaric doctrine that "everybody may be killed in war" is assured of its success. Now everybody can be killed in war—easily, quickly, cheaply.

### Total War

Throughout the course of this whole historical development no one has ever made the argument that war ought to be made total as a matter of reason and right. War simply became more and more total as a matter of fact and possibility. The immoral impulses of exaggerated nationalism began the development. The material achievements of modern technology completed it. Technological progress has finally removed all the limitations formerly imposed on warfare by pure circumstances—by restricted financial resources, by difficulties in transport and communications, and most importantly by inferior weaponry.

This is the historic juncture at which we now stand. If limitations are to be imposed on warfare today, they can be imposed only by the free decisions of men. No other source of limitation presently exists.



This is why we stand at a parting of the ways. Two paths are open. In his encyclical of November 2, 1956, Pope Pius XII called one "the road of justice," and the other "the steep slope of violence."

Man can choose to let the mad logic of total war dictate his decisions with regard to military policies and weapons programs. This steep slope of violence, followed far enough, leads toward the totality of ruin implicit in today's technologically certain fact: "Everybody can now be killed in war."

Or man can choose to shake off the hold which this mad logic has fastened upon his mind. He can elect to return to the road of justice—to the civilized tradition of limited warfare. He can recognize that the enterprise of war is inherently subject to certain limitations in its purposes and methods; that these limitations find their original source and their final authority in the moral order; that this order is sanctioned by God; that its precepts are therefore absolute in their command over all human action, including the action of war.

Only along this path of moral choice, as I shall say, will men find their way to security. In the last analysis, only the principle of justice can draw the line between civilized warfare and sheer massacre, between legitimate defense of the basic order of human life and the barbaric destruction of all order in human life. Unless this line is drawn, with absolute firmness, there can be no solid foundation for human security.

I do not say that it will be easy to draw the line at which the civilian claim to immunity from violence in war asserts itself in the face of the counsels of military expediency. But I do say that this civilian claim is made in the inviolable name of justice and that all military operations—defensive or retaliatory—must respect it. All expediencies cede in the face of right.

Similarly, I do not maintain that it will be easy to reverse the trend of a century-old regression into the immoral concept of war as total, and to reaffirm the trend of the Christian tradition toward the concept of war as limited. But I do maintain that this task is not impossible. It is always within the power of man to abandon false ideas and to dismantle the institutions built upon them. He can therefore do away with the idea and institution of total war, if only he decides firmly enough that he wants to do so, and that in the nuclear age he must do so.

He has already been powerfully helped to this decision by the facts themselves. On the practical level, the bankruptcy of any policy of total war is today amply evident. A total nuclear war, fought to a total victory, could only mean total woe. It would mean "woe to the vanquished," in a sense far beyond the savage meaning of that barbarian cry. And it would mean woe to the victor too, when he found himself in a world of ruins, amid a humanity which would bear death in its very bones. Here is an argument that



must give pause even to the most cynical exponents of violence.

### The Appeal to Justice

For us, however, the rejection of total war must be more solidly based. Our appeal must be to the high principles of justice that lie at the heart of the Western tradition of civilized warfare. Human reason has never refuted these high principles; the will of man has simply abandoned them. The tradition did not succumb to argument, but only to fact—to the fact of man's passions, as they are aroused by the violence of war, and proceed to arm themselves with the products of technology.

Here perhaps I should note that the reason and moral conscience of America too have been obscured by the dark fires of wartime passion. Upon us too, as upon other nations, there rests a responsibility for the rupture of the tradition of civilized warfare. Not least for this reason there rests upon us a responsibility for repairing the breach.

The principles of the tradition are still with us, in all their undiminished vitality. The problem is to translate them into practical conclusions in two areas of urgent concern—first, our military policy in general, and second, a weapons program that will support our military policies. Here is the way I see the structure of the problem.

The present goal of all the policies of the United States is to force the conflict with communism out of the field of armed violence into the

areas of diplomacy, politics, and economics. These areas are highly competitive indeed; but competition in them does not mean bloodshed. They are the chosen areas in which we undertake to urge the cause of justice for all men. Moreover, we must be continually mindful that the conflict with communism is basically spiritual; therefore, our victory will not be won without recourse to the sword of the spirit which is the word of God.

The primary military contribution toward this general American goal must be the maintenance of the capacity to deter all unjust aggression even of a limited kind. The primacy of this function of force is reinforced today because our principal enemy will be restrained from the use of force only if we convince him that it will prove too costly to him.

### The Problem We Face

This policy of deterrence may fail. Military aggression of one kind or another may occur. Peaceful methods of rectifying the injustice thus committed may likewise fail. We shall then be forced into war. This contingency must be faced now. The problem is to determine, in advance of this contingency, the military policies that will be consistent with the tradition of civilized warfare.

At one extreme justice requires that we reject the concept of total nuclear warfare. The bold fact that large nuclear bombs can wipe out whole civilian populations does not



put an end to the claim of the civilian to immunity from the violence of war.

At the other extreme, our tradition of civilized warfare does not require that we succumb to the deception involved in the Soviet proposal that all use of nuclear weapons be outlawed. This propaganda aims to make the world believe that any use of nuclear weapons inevitably means the totalization of the conflict. This is not true. A nuclear war can still be a limited war. To believe otherwise is to deny that man is a rational being capable of controlling his own actions. It is likewise to assert that American military men are incapable of making intelligently moral use of their new weapon.

Furthermore, in the present situation of international lawlessness a total renouncement of nuclear armaments by the United States would mean the betrayal of our moral tradition, which requires that we should not abandon the cause of justice or leave ourselves unprepared to defend it effectively.

Both of these extremes contain the moral fallacy of totalization. Between them we must find a middle course, the road of justice. It leads to a firmly defined but flexible military policy that will recognize two principles as controlling in the use of nuclear arms—first, the military principle of necessity or usefulness, and second, the higher moral principle of justice in the use of force.

This brings me to the next question. It is the practical question of

developing a nuclear weapons-program which will be consistent with the foregoing general military policies.

Here I want to lay all possible emphasis on the initial principle that our military policies must control our weapons-program. The fatal error that we are presently in danger of making is that of allowing weapons to dictate policy. The danger is really twofold—first, lest we allow weapons-technology to control the weapons-program; and second, lest we allow the stockpiled results of the weapons-program to control military policies with regard to the use of the stockpile. To succumb to these related dangers would be to turn the whole of U.S. policy upside down.

Early this year I outlined a nuclear weapons-program that would avert these dangers and give to moral principles and military policies their proper primacy over weapons. To the program I gave the title, "rational nuclear armament." There were three proposals.

The first concerned the size of thermonuclear bombs. Three considerations led me to my position. I stated the first in a speech given on November 17, 1955,<sup>1</sup> when I said that the advent of the H-bomb "taught us, not only that we had a new weapon, but that we had a different kind of weapon . . . The thermonuclear bomb crosses the threshold into a separate category of power."

The second consideration, closely

<sup>1</sup> See the *Catholic Mind*, August, 1956, p. 476 ss.

related to the first, is the fact that it is technologically possible to enlarge indefinitely the qualitatively new dimension of destructiveness created by the hydrogen bomb. I adverted to this fact in a statement before the Senate Subcommittee on Disarmament on April 12, 1956, in these words: "We know that there is no upper limit to the size of bombs that can be made . . ."

The third consideration is likewise something that we know. As I put it in the November 1955 speech, already cited: ". . . there is a limit to the number of large thermonuclear explosions that the human race can withstand without harmful bodily effects," consequent on radioactive products.

From these three considerations a conclusion follows. We ourselves must make a responsible decision with regard to the size of H-bombs that we undertake to manufacture. This decision is not only technological and military, but also moral. It must be controlled by the moral principle of justice as well as by the military principle of usefulness. My proposal was that we make this imperative decision, setting an upper limit to the size of H-bombs to be placed in stockpile. I have already given it as my conviction that the weapons we have in hand are large enough. Indeed, they may prove to be too large. Once we make this decision regarding size we can be free to give attention to the problem of improving the deliverability and consequently the military usefulness of weapons in the range up to this

limit. In addition, we should set a limit to the number, as well as to the size, of the large weapons that we accumulate. The reason is the presumption that there are only a limited number of uses, militarily and morally justifiable, to which the large bombs might be put.

My second proposal was that we concentrate increasingly on the development of nuclear weapons in the lower order of destructiveness and that we equip ourselves with a wide range of weapons in this order. The purpose of this policy is to strengthen our capabilities for waging all the kinds of limited warfare into which we may possibly be forced.

Thirdly, I came to the question of tests. Recently there has been much debate concerning the hazards to health involved in past and continued testing of large nuclear weapons. This is an area in which at the present time a great deal of uncertainty exists. The greatest possible study ought to be given to the entire problem of the dangers to health involved in the testing and use of nuclear weapons. However, my proposals have grounds of their own, even apart from the problems of these hazards.

They follow from the two major policy decisions I have recommended. My proposals are, first, no tests should be held of weapons whose magnitude would exceed the upper limit which we must set to the size of our nuclear weapons. Second, we should accelerate the testing of a wide range of weapons in the lower



order of nuclear force. The reason is that our objective should be a balanced stockpile, suited to every strategic and tactical need, but confined within the bounds set by justice to the use of force.

The weapons-program I proposed is rational in two senses. It is consistent with the moral principles of the civilized tradition, and it is adapted to the military necessities of the nuclear age.

One further comment needs to be made. My proposals for a rational weapons-program have to be considered as a structured unit, consistent in themselves and with their premises. This is particularly true of the proposal with regard to tests. This proposal cannot be called substantially similar to any of the proposals that were made in the course of the election campaign.

### Danger in the Crisis

The program that I propose is designed to carry us through the critical era of uncertain duration which confronts us. The crisis concerns, at bottom, the nature of man. But by the same token, it concerns the nature of war, as a human action. The danger in the crisis is lest we commit ourselves to the steep violence that ends in the abyss. But let us not overlook the opportunity which the crisis likewise presents—the greatly historic opportunity to choose the road of justice, and to undertake the restoration of the tradition of civilized warfare.

It is with a view to grasping this opportunity that I put forward my

program for rational nuclear armament. Its several proposals are counsels of strength, not of weakness. But the strength they counsel is both military and moral. Therefore, they constitute a program for security in the present crisis. They recognize that the security of America does not reside solely in its military power but more basically in its moral strength—the kind of strength that ultimately controls the use of power, and makes it serve the ends of justice.

Our national and international security has been undermined today largely by the rupture of the tradition of civilized warfare. This, and not the discovery of atomic energy, lies at the root of the terror experienced by the world at the thought of war. There will be security as long as the rupture of the tradition endures. We shall have no security as long as we are prisoners of the moral fallacy of totalization—that is, as long as we consent to the immoral notion of total war, as long as we dream of the impossible notion of total victory, and as long as we cherish the empty illusion that our national security is totally reposed in massive military might. These fallacies furnish the impulse toward the steep slope of violence.

A program of rational nuclear armament would go far toward rescuing us from these disastrous fallacies. In setting us on the road of justice it would likewise set us on the road to security.

A balanced stockpile, resting on a broad base of small atomic weapons,

would not indeed be the most destructive stockpile that we are capable of producing. It will not contain the increasingly immense weapons that the United States could manufacture, if we wanted, but that we could not use without carrying the enterprise of warfare over that fixed line, drawn by the principles of justice, which divides civilized warfare from barbarism. Moreover, the kind of stockpile I propose will not be the cheapest that could be assembled; it will not equip us to deal out the greatest number of deaths for the least number of dollars.

But for my part, I reject the reckless line of thought which would identify our national security with the accumulation of the most destructive possible nuclear arsenal and the cheapest possible nuclear arsenal. This kind of armament, heavily overweighted on the side of megaton bombs, would make neither military nor moral sense. It would not strengthen our military position in the face of threats from the Soviet Union or from other sources. Still less would it buttress our moral standing in the eyes of the international community. On the contrary, it would endanger both. And it would, in consequence, undermine our security.

### "The Forgotten Equation"

This brings me to what I call "the forgotten equation." I mean the equation between morality and security. This equation is inherent in the Western tradition. This first se-

curity that a civilized nation must protect is the security of its own moral life. The nation is secure in proportion to its fidelity to the moral norms that form the spiritual substance of the national life. Concretely, if the United States is obliged to have recourse to armed force in its own defense, it must understand that it is committed to a moral use of force, on penalty of self-destruction—I mean the destruction of its moral self.

The security which America seeks cannot be simply physical. It must also mean the protection of the spiritual identity of America as a member of the family of civilized nations. If America were to lose its own soul by sins of unjust violence, it matters little what else it might gain.

The tragedy is that in our day this equation between security and morality has been forgotten. We have come to believe that security means only one thing—massive power. And we have forgotten that the methods of power, when used in violation of the canons of justice, will undermine the basic moral security of the whole edifice of civilization which they should undertake to protect.

The equation between morality and security is, I say, part of our tradition. The nuclear age has confronted us with another equation whose ultimate terms are terrible indeed. I mean the equation between the immoral use of nuclear force and the destruction of all human security, even the fundamen-

tal security of human life itself. Surely this new equation should serve to jog our memories and bring to mind the old equation that we have forgotten. The reforging of the broken link between morality and security is itself an important element in the restoration of the tradition of civilized warfare.

To this task of restoration we are summoned today by the stringent demand of a moral obligation. It is a duty that we owe to ourselves as a civilized nation. It is further a duty that we owe to Almighty God whose precepts presided over the formation of our constitutional commonwealth.



## Communism in Hungary

Communism has proved to be a complete and unmitigated failure in Hungary, without a single redeeming or even extenuating result. In the far-off days of Béla Kun, the unanimous boycott of the peasantry broke it, despite the fact that in 1919 Communism was so far national that a military minority, not seeing any other potential ally against the Roumanian invasion of Transylvania than Moscow, supported it and indeed made the Communist assumption of power possible. In 1945 and the following years not even a slight touch of national character could be attributed to Communism. It was an import, completely alien to the Hungarians, held in hatred and contempt by the whole population, including those somewhat secondary Peasant Party leaders who, in their despair, imagined the transient formula of a Popular Front to be possible, until the Western allies could get the Soviet troops out.—*Bela Menczer in the (London) TABLET, November 3, 1956.*



*The duty of the physician  
is to all human life and  
therefore in the case of the  
obstetrician both to mother  
and child.*

## Mother or Child . . . Whose Life?\*

RICHARD S. DONOVAN, M.D.  
*Providence Hospital, Detroit*

**I** DON'T want to have my baby in a Catholic hospital, Doctor."

This statement has been made to me more than once. No doubt, it has been made to many another doctor who suggests bringing his patients to a Catholic hospital.

I have heard it from both Catholic and non-Catholic patients, persons whom I would have judged to have known the truth of the matter and others who apparently are not culpable because of ignorance. On some occasions it has been voiced by a patient who is party of a mixed marriage.

The decision which prompts such a remark is usually based on the im-

pression that, in the case of an obstetrical difficulty, the Church requires the attending physician to save the child even at the sacrifice of the mother's life.

It should be clearly understood that the conscientious obstetrician's duty is concerned with preserving the lives of both the mother and her child. This two-fold interest directed toward the safe delivery of a living, healthy infant to a healthy, undamaged mother should be the object of every obstetrician regardless of his religious beliefs. Such an aim should be sought in all hospitals where good obstetrics is conducted, non-Catholic and Catholic alike. The

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\*Reprinted from the *Catholic Woman*, 120 Parsons Ave., Detroit, Mich., November, 1956.

quality of obstetrics referred to at this point is simply that based on purely medical standards.

The picture of a Catholic obstetrician, emerging from the dilemma of the delivery room bearing triumphantly in his arms a squalling but motherless infant is more apt to be conjured out of fancy than of fact. Emergencies do arise, true enough. But the meeting of such is not with the attitude of saving one and letting the other perish.

### Medical Ethics

Even from a secular view-point the duties enjoined upon physicians in this respect echo from the pagan days of Hippocrates down to the present International Code of Medical Ethics adopted by the World Medical Association in London 1949. The code stipulates: "A doctor must always bear in mind the importance of preserving human life from the time of conception until death." The duty of the physician, thus, is to all human life and in the case of the obstetrician, therefore, both to mother and child.

In actual practice, where the lives of both mother and child are in imminent danger, the approach to the problem is in not doing anything which would directly jeopardize the life of either one, or, conversely, to undertake procedures which are directed toward the lessening of the existing dangers. Most often when the life of the mother is gravely threatened, as, for example, in certain types of hemorrhage, the altered physiology of the mother is

such that the unborn infant is in much poorer physical condition than the mother at the given moment. Not too infrequently in such instances the baby has actually already succumbed.

There remains, therefore, no choice to confront the physician in a large proportion of these situations. Some of these complications may require delivery by Cesarean section for the preservation of the *mother's* life even after the death of the infant has occurred. This decision would be dictated only by what is generally conceded to be good obstetrical practice. Certainly it is contrary to the old concept fostered by some that a Cesarean section is nothing more than a deliberate attempt to salvage the life of the child at the direct expense of the mother's life.

Such "good practice" is not limited to Catholic hospitals or, for that matter, to non-Catholic ones. It is proper for physicians who practice in either type of institutions. It is general knowledge that the staffs of most Catholic hospitals are made up of doctors of Catholic, Protestant and Jewish religions. Indeed, many non-Catholic doctors attain top departmental offices on such staffs. In some obstetrical departments non-Catholic doctors are found who have by their own choice conducted their practice for the greater part or entire part of their careers at Catholic hospitals.

It does not seem likely that they would do so if their work had been made more difficult for them by

reason of their adherence to the hospital regulations. Their professional escutcheons have not been marred because of the type of hospital in which they practiced, nor have they had to stand helplessly by while a mother is lost in the delivery room because it is required that they direct their ability primarily toward the saving of her baby.

### Obstetrician's Responsibility

The two-fold responsibility of the obstetrician to mother and infant is not something peculiar to hospitals and doctors whose principles of practice are guided by moral precepts of the Catholic Church. It is merely that the Church in these matters re-affirms and specifies by positive precept duties that are declared by the Natural Moral Law and, therefore, the law of God, namely, the sanctity of life and the inviolable right of the individual against unjust aggression.

There are other influences which render the necessity of the so-called choice on the part of the obstetrician less likely. These influences are reflected in the decrease in the maternal mortality rate through the past years. This reduction over the past fifty years, principally over the past twenty years, has been brought about by improvement in pre-natal care, improved techniques and methods of treatment with the ever-increasing availability of antibiotics, newer medications and blood transfusions, and the added knowledge of the use of anaesthetic agents.

Catholic hospitals have kept well

apace with this advance in technique. Their maternal and infant mortality rates bear out this contention, for they are well in line with those of comparable institutions city-wise and state-wise. Since a large proportion of hospitals having the greatest number of deliveries per year are Catholic hospitals, the result of their work necessarily is reflected in local, state and national mortality statistics.

In 1953, throughout the United States, the list of hospitals having the largest number of births as compiled by the American Medical Association included 12 Catholic hospitals among the first sixty.

In Michigan alone during the past 50 years the maternal death rate has declined by 94% and the infant mortality rate has been lowered by 83%. In 1900 the maternal rate was 10.3 per 1,000 live births and the infant death rate 157.1. The corresponding figures for 1950 were 0.6 and 26.3. That hospital care is involved in this reduction of death rates is brought out by the fact that in 1950, 97% of babies born in Michigan were delivered in hospitals while as recently as 1939 only 58% were so delivered.

To cite some local figures, the Detroit maternal death rate for 1925 was 6.8, and for 1950 it was 0.7. The infant death rates for these years were 80.1 and 27.2 respectively. One Detroit Catholic hospital with a large obstetrical service recorded in 1955 a new-born death rate of 18.2 and a maternal death rate of 0.29 per 1,000 live births.



(This manner of expressing these figures is in accordance with standard statistical methods.)

It is readily apparent that the trend of these rates indicates a progressive improvement over the years. Numerous statistics are available to support these statements. The evidence speaks for itself.

There is another phase of this question which might appropriately bear at least brief consideration at this point. The relationship of this aspect of the question is somewhat more remote than that which has been under discussion thus far.

### Therapeutic Abortion

The claim has been made in some quarters that in early pregnancy co-existing with certain maternal disease-conditions a mother's life is placed in a position of jeopardy by reason of the attitude which the Church (and, thus, Catholic hospitals) takes in the matter of interruption of pregnancy—in other words, in the matter of therapeutic abortion.

The unrelenting stand of the Church in regard to this procedure is well-known and long-known. It is not the purpose of this discussion to go into the morality governing this practice. Moral theologians have completely laid down the principles by which a Catholic doctor is to be guided in these matters. Basically they have to do with firstly, the right to life of a human being, body and soul, whatever be his stage of development. Secondly, the direct taking of an innocent life is homicide

at whatever age that life has reached when the act is committed.

Aside from the morality concerned, a definite point can be made purely on medical grounds in connection with therapeutic abortions. For years in institutions where these procedures are permitted they have been advocated when certain pathologic conditions are present during pregnancy. Some of the more frequently listed reasons have included pulmonary tuberculosis, rheumatic heart disease, toxemia of pregnancy, kidney infections, multiple sclerosis and certain psychiatric conditions. (Abortions done for economic or social reasons are not considered under medical indications.)

It is noteworthy to observe that the trend for a number of years and especially for the past two decades has been definitely toward a progressive decrease in the ratio of therapeutic abortions to the number of deliveries. Moreover, fewer and fewer abortions are being done for reasons which were formerly considered by some authorities valid medical indications, such as the before-mentioned conditions.

On the contrary, it is now stated by more than a few obstetrical authorities that they are not to be done for these conditions, since it has been shown that patients with such complications can go through their pregnancies safely if under proper management, or, at least, if the pregnancy does not aggravate the condition.

It is thought-provoking to note that there is marked discrepancy

among the larger clinics as to present-day reasons, or indications, for performing therapeutic abortions. A recent report comparing the results of three prominent eastern institutions and two similar mid-western clinics shows a range of the ratio of abortions to deliveries varying from 1 in 76 to 1 in 17,500 deliveries. Moreover, those institutions with a high incidence of therapeutic abortions have not shown significant reductions in their maternal mortality rates, a factor one would expect to appear if therapeutic abortions were to pay off to any appreciable extent in the saving of mothers' lives.

This discussion has touched upon only certain phases of a few of the many problems of medical ethics. In doing so, it has not been the writer's intent to create an impression of over-simplification as to their solutions. Many are difficult to solve in the light of present knowledge. Moreover, with the advance of medical knowledge newer problems arise.

Catholic doctors are fortunate in that they have guidance in ethical matters in the Code of Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic hos-

pitals. Theologians are continually pondering the answers to questions that confront physicians so that such regulations are never so fixed that they do not admit of adaptation provided the principles remain unchanged.

Father Gerald Kelly, S.J., the author of the series of publications, *Medico-Moral Problems*, states: "such a code cannot be static; it must grow as the progress of medical science opens up new problems and sheds new light on old ones. This does not mean that moral principles change. It simply means that the applications of such principles can multiply, that principles not yet expressed in a code might have to be added, and even that old principles may admit of more accurate formulation . . .

"It is definitely erroneous to state—as some are wont to state—that the Church has changed her stand on any principle . . . On the other hand, it is quite correct to say that opinions of theologians concerning the application of principles have been modified as medical facts became better known, not only by the theologians, but also by the physicians themselves."

*Physical love is meant to lead to a spiritual love of man for woman and of woman for man: and finally to a great love of both together for God.*

## The Ascent of Married Love\*

DONAL O'SULLIVAN, S.J.

MAN'S soul and body, sense and spirit, were created by God. And they were created to be united. But from the very nature of this created union there exists a certain tension in man, a tension tragically intensified by original sin, which wounded nature in the depths of its being. Man rebelled against God, and the flesh in man revolted against the spirit. And the effort of every human being—born infected and wounded—if he is to fulfill the end of his creation, has to be towards restoring the unity planned by God, a unity in which the spirit must harmoniously lead.

As far as man's sexual powers are concerned, their reluctance to re-

main within their appropriate bounds has only been too evident from Genesis until today. The bounds—marriage or complete continence—were not observable except by God's help. With the coming of the God-Man that help became sacramental; every marriage between His followers was to be henceforth a sacrament, a sign of efficacious aid. Man and woman will give each other grace, will give each other Christ: it takes three to get married. Marriage has multiple aspects; it is this theme—the spiritualizing of sexual love by God's sacramental grace—that this article will develop.

What do we mean by spirituality here? Spirituality is an attitude to-

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wards God, a way of conducting oneself before Him, a way of using particular gifts of His creation so that we praise Him especially in them and lead them and ourselves back to Him. So every Christian has the one spirituality, and yet no two have the same. For each one's attitude, while it may be a paltry thing, is his own; and no one, not even our Lady, can replace my service to God if I omit it. She and others can repair my omission; it will not be my service. So no two states of life will have exactly the same spirituality.

### The Married Vocation

A proper spirituality of marriage then will develop strongly a sense of the married vocation. It will judge its duties and its privileges by the divine purposes. It will see all the events of married life, its joys and sorrows, its moments of sex as well as its moments of spirit, in the light of the consecration of the wedding morning and in the hope of children to come. It was love the human couple consecrated to God—human love with its roots in the earth but whose trunk and branches must grow towards heaven and carry there the glory of the root. The more a couple truly love each other, the more is God praised.

If in these pages we study more the root than the branches, it is because the real difficulty for many is to see the spiritual in sex. The difficulty is vastly increased by all they see, hear, and—one might almost say—breathe. It is essential that a wholesome, realistic spiritual attitude

be developed towards sex and marriage.

It is romance, not realism, that has damaged so severely the ideal of marriage in the Western world. Only on realism can an ideal, a spirit, be surely founded. And here the reality is that Almighty God "created them male and female" in order that their union might result in new life. The primary purpose of sex is the child; that is the law of nature, the law of nature's Deviser. And God and nature are not mocked with impunity: five out of every six divorces are from childless marriages.

It is not a lessening of the dignity of marriage, but rather a heightening of it, that God should associate it with a task. Love grows and is nourished by its appointed task; for to love is to give, and its food is sacrifice, not indulgence.

Each child is unique. Each is a desire of God far more than it is a desire of the parents. Each He creates in love, singly and separately. Each is destined in hope to be a member of Christ's Body here and for eternity. If the Christian couple have faith, what a torrent of spirituality can take its origin from every cradle! Surely sex is sacred.

### Secondary Aim

Once marriage's prime aim is acknowledged and held in practical honor, its secondary aim—the mutual aid and spiritual and human enrichment of the partners—is not only not lessened but immeasurably increased and exalted. The two aims, with their just subordination, have been

wondrously merged by God, not only in the sexual union itself but also in the life-long, mutually supported effort of man and wife.

This life-long union of man and wife to found a home had something sacred in it even before the Incarnation. But with Christ's coming and by His will natural marriage was lifted into the realm of supernatural. This is what we mean when we say that every marriage between Christians is a sacrament. The sacrament is not some sort of solemn blessing added to marriage; it is the marriage itself. For all the other sacraments Christ invented signs to be carriers of holiness. In this one instance He used an already existing sign—natural marriage—the mutual handing over of the marriage right forever and to the partner alone. But symbolism alone does not make a sacrament. The symbol must actually give the grace it signifies. Marriage is the symbol of the union of Christ with His Church. It is a participation in that mystery which is effected by marriage.

Each Christian marriage is a particular instance of that tremendous union; each takes on the quality of its unity and indissolubility. And as the particular instances multiply, so the whole of humanity is, couple by couple, united to Christ its Head. The sacramental grace of marriage means a communication of the love-life of Christ and His Church flowing permanently—not merely on the wedding day—into the love-life of the Christian couple. It gives them the power to imitate that love in theirs

and to transform their joys and their sufferings, all the great moments and trifling details of the home into something approaching the divine.

### Role of Sex

Is there any need to say that the bodily union of man and wife shares in this wondrous transfiguration? Is it just a biological function, a mere physical act, or is it the making of two persons into one flesh in Christ? Is it a mating on the animal level or is it the uniting of two persons, of two Christians? The answer should be clear. On it depends in large manner the conduct of that action and the spiritualizing or demonizing of Christian marriage.

For the act of sex should be at once the sign and the source, the manifestation and the nourishment of an interior personal love. To reduce it to a mere physical act is to depersonalize both oneself and one's partner and to deprive the act of one of its all-important functions. It is to substitute the gift of a part of self for the gift of the whole. More truly, it is not a gift at all but a selfish grasping of an animal value in place of paying a debt of justice and a homage of love to another human being. It is to use another person as a means to self-gratification.

To treat a person as a thing is a sin—even if it is not as such catalogued as a fault in our prayer-book lists of examination of conscience. Indeed, to judge by many of these lists, adultery and birth control would seem to be the only sins against marriage. Humaneness seems

to make slow ground in prayer-book catalogues; but recent examinations of conscience for the married, published by American Jesuits and French Dominicans, in addition to the necessary stock questions make suggestions like this: "Have I made of the conjugal act a mere routine and not the expression of an ever-deepening love? Have I considered that marriage did away with all problems of chastity? Or on the other hand, have I thought that the actions of marriage were inseparable from sin? Have I in the conjugal act sought rather to satisfy my own carnal needs than to express love and mutual giving?"

Many marriages have been broken, many more limp miserably along that would have been saved from disaster and unchristian unloveliness by an enlightened use of confession. But improvement here is more than a question of just "going to confession." It is a question of using our intellects also, of a long discipline of the senses and of proper preparation for marriage.

If something in the nature of a noviceship is required for marriage as a whole, some preparation also is surely required for the carrying out of an act that demands for its noble performance such a combination of natural and supernatural qualities, such an amalgam of tenderness and grace as will never be provided by mere animal instinct alone.

To approach the deep and vital act of marriage without some awareness of the difficult physiological,

psychological, and spiritual problems involved is to run the risk of disunity and degradation. We are not just animals; we are not even just rational animals; we are rational animals in whom the Holy Spirit dwells.

In the man it is, at the best, ignorance—at the worst, lust—to take no account of the woman's radically different approach to bodily union, to disregard her need for consideration and affection. Days or weeks of coldness and indifference cannot, as if by miracle, be violently transmuted into warmth and love. The union given by a shared joy is often sacrificed to a selfish and hurried moment of animal passion. A man who acts thus may be technically "chaste"; but it is the chastity of the casuistry books and of "what is not forbidden," and it degrades the body instead of elevating it. There is no reverence.

For her part, the woman can err by making little effort to appreciate the more positive and physical quality of her husband's love and by displaying a false reserve which can vitiate the act of self-giving. "If human love fails," writes Bishop Sheen, "it is because it is short-circuited, not directed to a mutual incarnation of love but rather turned back on itself, where it dies of its own too-much." As with most of the failures in marriage, it is once again a failure in the fundamental law of self-sacrifice.

But it cannot be said too often and too clearly that the proper use of marriage should lead gradually to an appeasement, not to an un-



bridled heightening of the sexual instinct. It is meant to lead, in the process of time, to a spiritual love of man for woman and of woman for man; and finally to a great love of the man and woman together for God. Mere physical love must ascend or die; it must climb towards a spiritualized love or perish. And as it climbs it will find, as does love of the divine, that there are different "mansions." It too will have its purifyings and its dark nights and its aridities before the heights are reached. From sexual desire love must rise through sentiment to companionship.

It is somewhere in this reciprocal period that a crisis—sometimes the main crisis of marriage—takes place. For some that crisis is fatal and there is a descent. Others continue to climb courageously over cliffs to the unknown and through darkness, reach transfiguration. It is the spiritual period of offering and self-sacrifice.

For, while the sublimation of sex in Christian love means asceticism, it is no cold pastoral of marble men and maidens overwrought! "Accordingly as the sexual instinct is lived, as it is employed by the personality, it can be the strongest manifestation of spiritual love or it can be the worst of its obstacles," says Gustave Thibon, the French philosopher. There is no question then in marriage of renouncing and killing sex. Rather it is that the flesh has to be raised up in the ascent of the soul; the lower life must be assumed into the higher and participate in it; it

must not be destroyed but restored on a higher level. The beginnings of love are mainly sexual—though rarely overtly so. It is the flesh which impregnates and directs the soul—almost ensnares it.

### The Crisis of Marriage

Too often the change from idyll to reality is frighteningly hard. It is the first serious purification in marriage. It may come within the first year; it will almost certainly come within the first decade. And it may recur alarmingly in middle life. The body pays toll to habit; it has become used to affection and to affection's expression. Mentally, too, the thrill of discovery has ceased. Close daily intimacy has exhausted the partners' resources (and so many couples have no intellectual or artistic interest); and the children may be more of a burden than a bond. It sadly dawns on the disillusioned lover that what he married was an idealized projection of himself and not this very, very real person. It is the crisis of marriage.

Bishop Sheen writes that those who don't purify their love generally resort at this point to any one of five false solutions: 1) they look for a new partner; 2) they decide to separate; 3) the husband takes to business and the wife to bridge; 4) they resort to alcohol; 5) they consult a Freudian psychoanalyst who tells them to divorce and re-marry, or to repeat the problem all over again.

The true solution is in a spiritualization of love. To those with "the

honied treasures of their bodies spent and no new life to show" that spiritualization will be extraordinarily difficult. But they may find it comparatively easy who have fulfilled the primary end of marriage and have tasted the joys and seriously faced the responsibilities of parenthood and the family. For they will have gone to school to their children and learned some selflessness and some sense of responsibility to others. The solution cannot be an external facade of friendship with loneliness at the heart's core. A struggle, a hard fight, must be manfully undertaken to love with a love of the will the partner as he is, with the sacramental aid of the "God of things as they are."

Thanks to the sacrament, the struggle is the struggle of Christ—and He is risen! And the dark night does lead to a transformation, to a transfiguring of love. For the married it leads to a willing of the oth-

er's good, to a loving of the person, and a loving of the person not merely in spite of his faults but because of his faults; and with it emotional love, changed yet the same, may often return.

"And now, Lord, give them cause to bless Thee more and more" prays their Mother the Church for the newly-married pair a moment after each has given Christ to the other. It is from the spiritualized love that we have been describing, and from the life-long striving for it, that man and wife will reach a great love of God for Himself, will attain the end for which He made them. But there is no facile solution: love remains the fruit of self-sacrifice. Self-sacrifice cannot long continue without the Sacrifice. "The family that prays together stays together." The family that draws the strength for self-sacrifice from Christ's continuing Sacrifice amongst us cannot be counted a failure.



## True Freedom

True freedom, essential to the foundation as to the continuation of our republic, requires both knowledge of the good and the will to choose it when known. It is the right to claim what is due to oneself. It is the understanding of self-sacrifice, the mature sense of responsibility towards one's fellow-men and the common good of the whole society. Democracy, then, offers ideals and goals worth striving for, although never perfectly realized.—*Patricia Barrett, R.S.C.J., in SOCIAL ORDER, February, 1957.*

*Though materialism has permeated modern philosophy on the subject, the faith does not impede the Catholic scholar from pursuing scientific studies about evolution and early Man.*

## Evolution Re-evaluated\*

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IN MANY discussions it is necessary to distinguish between what an anthropologist friend of mine calls "folk Catholicism" and the attitude of theologians and other well-educated Catholics. Such a distinction is particularly appropriate in a discussion of evolution. Today we are witnessing a re-evaluation of this topic by theologians, and many Catholics have not kept up with theological thinking.

Therefore, I shall first state the informed Catholic attitude, as of now. I shall then briefly discuss the sources of this attitude: 1) from the

point of view of the Bible, and 2) from the point of view of Dogma.<sup>1</sup>

### The Catholic Attitude

Basic to this attitude is the fact that there is no officially proclaimed doctrine of the Catholic Church which is in contradiction with a theory of the evolution of Man's body.

We shall see how this statement squares with the reluctance (currently less than it was, but still existing) of theologians to welcome evolution. Part of the answer here and now, is apparent in the fact

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<sup>1</sup> I am particularly indebted to the Rev. George Glanzman, S.J., Professor of Old Testament, at Woodstock College, Md., for his counsel in the writing of this article.

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that I refer to "*a* theory of evolution," and not "*the* theory..." In the minds of many, "*the*" theory of evolution is a materialistic one, and one which has permeated much of modern philosophy and social thinking. But a Catholic scholar can safely explore a spiritualistic theory of evolution, while he could never be an adherent of a completely materialistic theory.

For a Catholic is bound to believe—and that because of the most weighty authority the Church can give the doctrine—that all men (and hence the first man) are endowed by God with spiritual souls. This soul is an immaterial and substantial principle, directly created by God for each man. Spirit and matter are on such essentially differing levels of being, that matter, of itself, could never produce a spiritual soul. United with matter, the soul infuses it with essential humanity. Each man is a unit, composed of spirit and matter, inextricably fused, while that man is alive on earth.

This demand of the Church for belief in the human soul should hardly come as a surprise to anyone (unfashionable as the word "soul" is in many circles today), because there would be no point to religion at all, unless Man possessed a spiritual soul. At any rate, it means that no Catholic can hold a theory which claims that Man is nothing but an educated ape!

In connection with problems that may arise, when one compares Catholic teaching and a theory of evolution, we must note several

other beliefs common to Catholics.

The first is the belief that all living humanity had two original parents. This is by no means as fantastic as many modern secularists may think. They have grown up in an intellectual atmosphere which jeers at the "myth" of Genesis; they would be hard put to it to document their attitude; certainly none of them has examined the true meaning of Genesis as has the Catholic exegete or dogmatic theologian, nor appreciated its meaning in the context of the total teaching of the Church concerning original sin and the Redemption.

Actually, we know of Adam and Eve only from revelation, and a belief in an original pair is not in conflict with any real scientific evidence. This belief means that the Catholic cannot hold the thesis that mankind subsequent to Adam derives from many truly human sources, or from a single but group source.

Finally, the Catholic must believe that our first parents were constituted human beings by the direct and immediate action of God, an action that affected both soul and body. This therefore, is one of the rare times when God interfered with natural history; His direct action was necessary because of the spirituality of the soul, just as He had to create a soul for each one of us today.

God may indeed have used a body prepared for the soul as far as possible by evolution (as opposed to the relatively unorganized matter

mentioned in Genesis). But this body could not have been properly called human before the spiritual soul was infused into it. Nor could it be called man unless, antecedent to the infusion of the soul, or at least because of the infusion of the soul and concomitantly with that infusion, the body was radically reorganized, so that this matter was elevated to the stature of the human. This reorganization occurred on the deeper level of being, which we might call philosophical. It is very possible that the change that took place would escape the detective potentialities of science, and particularly the powers of palaeontology.

In sum, we may say that the Catholic must believe that Man was constituted Man by the immediate action of God (this constitution was his, as opposed to that of all other visible beings of the Universe), precisely as he is not merely a material being; he was "made in the image and likeness of God" because of his soul.

This set of beliefs on the part of the Catholic does not in any way impede him from pursuing scientific studies about evolution or early Man, any more than a belief in a spiritual soul keeps a Catholic psychologist from studying human mental activities or a Catholic anatomist from studying the architecture of the human brain. All the external or autogenetic influences on Man, all the possible categories of human behavior (cultural, physiological, psychological, idiosyncratic) are as

much open for investigation by a Catholic scholar as by any other. In short, Man can be considered as an object of natural science by the Catholic.

No doubt this brief statement has raised a number of questions in the reader's mind. For example: How can the Church, which claims that her doctrine is divine and therefore immutable, change her attitude towards evolution? What right does the Church have to dictate to the Catholic scientist in matters which are outside of her religious realm? These and other questions will be touched on in the ensuing two parts, which essentially are aimed at giving the theological documentation for our initial statement.

### The Primary Fact

In this matter, as in all others, the primary fact for the Catholic is that he believes the Church to be an institution which is teacher, law-giver and sanctifier. In these functions, the Church is the mystical continuation of the historical Christ, who possessed these functions and who transmitted them to the Church. The Holy Spirit guarantees the continued purity of doctrine of the Church. In a word, the Catholic believes what the Church teaches.

But there is an economy in Divine Revelation. Not only is it restricted to religious truths, but God has not, so to speak, satisfied our curiosity about every single detail or aspect. Not only can we grow in appreciation of religious truth, but certain facets will probably always elude us.

Christ's Church not only, therefore, guards that immutable body of revealed doctrines (which we call the "deposit of Faith"), but also rules over that progress in the understanding of Revelation which comes from a growth in realization of relationships, and from a growth of clarification which is derived from experience. Perhaps more importantly for the individual Catholic in his daily life, the Church supplies us with norms of belief here and now, from day to day. These norms are not merely intellectual—they are also practical; these norms are not only for the highly educated—they are also for all Catholics, of high and low degree. For the Church has a universal responsibility for all Catholics.

Now, the Catholic believes in many doctrines, and the ordinary Catholic is, perhaps, indiscriminating in his belief. But the theologian (a professionally educated Catholic) arranges Catholic beliefs according to their order of authority.

Some doctrines are *defined*. These doctrines are declared infallibly and irrevocably true by a Pope or an Ecumenical Council. Thus, the definition that every man possesses a spiritual soul. Such a doctrine will never be changed.

Definitions are not arbitrarily issued, but are made because of some need; thus, the doctrine may be under special attack. There are many doctrines not defined, but believed by the Universal Church, because they are intimately interrelated with defined doctrines, or are obviously

taught by the universal tradition of the Church.

This tradition is not simply the handing down of stories from generation to generation, but the traditional belief as proposed by the Universal Church, the infallibility of which is guarded by the Holy Spirit.

The day-by-day teaching of the Church (*Magisterium* is the technical word) is shown in its highest form in a Papal Encyclical, which becomes the proximate norm for the theologian, in his studies, judgments and theories concerning the doctrines involved.

In attempting to characterize *informed* Catholic opinion on any subject, including evolution, we must emphasize the role of the Catholic theologian. In matters which are not clearly defined or otherwise placed outside the pale of basic debate, the Church usually leaves the field to the studies of her theologians, unless or until there be need for more official action on her part. The authority of theologians, as a body, is great, because they teach and write publicly, and hence are eminently susceptible to inspection and correction by the Church.

The majority opinion of theologians is, then, important as a guide, here and now, for the belief of the Catholic. This opinion on certain subjects may change, for a variety of reasons. But at any given time, the majority opinion of theologians is the safe and prudent one for Catholics to follow.

The Church, and, according to his office, the theologian, has to do



more than safeguard the purity of doctrine, regarded as a purely intellectual thing. The moral implications of doctrine are basically important in human life. And the Church is not only committed to the care of intellectuals; it has all the range of humanity within its fold. The Church's officials, therefore, must be prudent in their statements and actions, from every point of view.

### The Bible

For the last three hundred years or so, it has been more clearly realized than ever before that the Bible is not a book of science. No, the Bible is a religious book, and we should look in it for evidence concerning a scientific problem only when Revelation has offered us knowledge pertinent to that problem.

Moreover, any given part of the Bible is written in a human language. A human language does not exist floating around in a vacuum; it is spoken by a definite group of people equipped with a definite culture. A definite culture means that these people see the world and talk about it differently from other people.

Thus the exegete, in striving to ascertain exactly what God revealed, must take into account what is usually called the literary style of the passage or passages involved. So it is that interpretations can differ as knowledge grows. An example of this is the fact that many exegetes today say that a symbolic interpretation of the derivation of Eve from

Adam is possible. Nevertheless, the basic truth inculcated by the first part of Genesis is never changed. God will always be the Creator of all things and of Man. The exact way God acted is of lesser importance.

The primary rule of Biblical interpretation was made clear by St. Augustine about thirteen centuries ago, and it has been reiterated in two of the great papal Encyclicals on Scripture study, *Providentissimus Deus* and *Divino Afflante Spiritu*. This rule is simple: the sacred text is to be taken as meant literally, unless reason or necessity demand that we interpret it otherwise.

Of course, some texts are obviously metaphorical—the Lord is said to have an arm, for example, whereas God is a pure spirit. But, until 1859, there was no particular reason to doubt the literalness of the Genesis description of creation.

Now the Catholic, and especially the conscientious exegete, does not change his traditional interpretation of a text of Sacred Scripture just because of his early-morning disposition or because someone says it would be nice to change. He demands solid reasons for such a change. It is not often appreciated by scientists that the actual and basic proof for the evolution of Man (which is, of course, the palaeontological) was very, very slim in 1859, and did not improve much until near the beginning of the twentieth century. We have discovered more human fossils in the last twenty years than ever before. It is also not often

appreciated by scientists that when the theologians turned to the writings of scientists to find out the reasonableness of their case, they very often met with contradictory statements.

So we cannot blame the exegetes for not wanting to act like weather-vanes. Even today, although they have been investigating the possible relationships between Scripture and evolution for a long time, they treat this latter as not yet certainly proven, although, together with the dogmatic theologians, there are many more favorable to it as a theory than there were fifty or sixty years ago.

We should like to submit a great deal of historical material on this topic, but space is short. Under this heading, however, we must give a brief account of the decrees of the Biblical Commission, set up by Pope Leo XIII in 1902. Although the decrees we shall discuss were handed down in 1909, they are not merely historical, since they are still in force. The Catholic is required to give internal prudential assent to these decrees, since they are approved by the Pope and represent a specialized form of the ordinary teaching function (*Magisterium*) of the Church.

At the time these decrees were issued, the Bible in general, and the traditional human authorship of parts of the Bible, were under heavy fire from non-Catholic scholars. At the same time, some Catholics (the Modernists) proposed the opinion that the Biblical narratives were

myths, with no historical value, to be interpreted any way one desired.

Today, the debates of the early twentieth century have subsided. Non-Catholics have gained a greater respect for the Bible as an historical document (archaeology, for instance, has helped); Catholics have become less concerned about authenticity (e.g., whether Moses wrote the whole Pentateuch, or was the main influence in its composition), and more concerned with the content and meaning of the various books, which are inspired, no matter who their human authors were.

In the midst of violent attacks on the veracity and historic value of the Bible, the Biblical Commission issued eight decrees, which are notable for their Catholic spirit. In spite of the atmosphere of hectic polemics at the time, the decrees follow the Catholic way, the *via media*, the moderate way of common sense. These decrees, in essence, said that the *real* meaning of Scripture should be followed. They took the middle path between Fundamentalism and Modernism.

We should like to present and comment upon all eight of these decrees, but for the purposes of this discussion the third is of outstanding importance. In this decree the Commission indicated those fundamental teachings of the first three chapters of Genesis which were not to be disregarded by Catholics, because they are intimately connected with basic truths of Christian doctrine.

For our present purposes we may

quote the following of these fundamental teachings: "... the creation of all things by God in the beginning of time, the special creation of Man, the formation of the first woman from man, the unity of the human race . . ."; and also there were statements concerning the constitution of our first parents in grace, their fall, and the "promise of a future Redeemer."

Now, much has happened since June 20, 1909. We have had the Encyclical of Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943), in which our present Pontiff notes, among many other topics pertinent to Biblical studies, the fact that the exegete must be careful to search out the true meaning of the text by using all possible aids, including the analysis of the real meanings expressed by Eastern literary forms. The Pope also points out that patient collaboration has solved some of the problems that plagued exegetes in the time of Leo XIII, and that future patient collaboration of all types of disciplines, sacred and profane, may be expected to solve the problems that confront them today.

We have had the letter of the then (1948) Secretary of the Biblical Commission, Fr. Vosté, to Cardinal Suhard of Paris. Concerning this letter Fr. Jones writes that the letter "emphasizes the 'popular' character of the sacred account of human origins and asks for a further examination of the religious problems involved. It also recalls the words of the Holy Father in which the

Catholic exegete is urged to solutions which, while fully respecting the Church's doctrine, will take adequate account of the *proved* conclusions of the natural sciences. It is an invitation no true Catholic will refuse."

We have had most recently two reviews of the new official *Enchiridion Biblicum* (an official handbook of ecclesiastical sources concerning Biblical studies), from the present Secretary and Sub-Secretary of the Biblical Commission. These reviews indicate how the decrees of the Commission must be considered in their historical context, and how confident the Church is that her men of science in the Scriptural field will work out many questions now somewhat obscure. This is an echo of the confidence expressed by Pius XII in the Encyclical already noted.

But most importantly we have had the Encyclical *Humani Generis* (1950), which we shall examine in some detail in the next section. This encyclical forms the bridge between our two sections, for, while it contains normative directives for the Biblical scholar, it is predominantly a dogmatic document.

### Dogma

The basic attitude of a theologian toward any given question is quite different (as one might expect) from that of a scientist. For the theologian, Revelation is transcendental, that is, it is the supremely important phenomenon of the Universe—because of its Origin and because it



leads to life eternal, the value of which far outstrips any concern of this transitory earthly life.

The concepts of God and Heaven, I may say, make human knowledge and science pale and less fascinating.

This is to overstate the case somewhat, because the Church (notably in the decrees of the Vatican Council) has often come to the defense of the power and the essential rectitude of human reason. Indeed, in our times, Catholic philosophy is the champion of human reason against those who deny it any possibility of valid contact with real truth.

However, the theologian gives primacy to Revelation. For him the deposit of faith left us by Christ is of overwhelming importance. This deposit must be preserved and defended. Hence, a proper conservatism is an essential characteristic of the theologian.

By way of contrast to that last paragraph, let us consider the position of the theologians in the 1860s. First of all, the doctrine of evolution was a new thing, and had to be considered carefully in its relation with dogma and the traditional interpretation of various parts of Scripture. Secondly, so many of the protagonists of evolution were also missionaries of what amounted to materialism (e.g., Huxley and Haeckel). It is scarcely to be expected that theologians would embrace materialism, which is the negation of the spirit and of religion. It is easy to see how emotions on both sides could obscure

the truth, and particularly how difficult it would be for the theologians to keep the proper distinctions clear in the minds of the great mass of Catholics. Remember, we said before that the Church has not only an intellectual but a moral duty, in its care for all the faithful, lettered and unlettered. Another complication also arose: social doctrines, imitating biological evolutionary theory (e.g., "the law of Nature, red in tooth and claw"), became popular, and further confused the picture. It is easy enough for us, at times, to look back and see what should have been said and done during the battle, now that so much of the dust and smoke have settled. But let us remember that we, of this generation, have unsolved problems, too.

Let us now briefly present more accurate documentation for our preliminary statement, by passing in review the sources available to the theologian, on the three topics of (a) the evolution of Man's body in general; (b) the soul; and (c) Adam and Eve.

(a) There is no defined doctrine which opposes a theory of the evolution of Man's body, and no definitions or other important pronouncements of the Church on this subject, with the exception of the three we shall mention. Up to 1909, there were two "private acts" of the Roman authorities, namely the request made of Fr. Leroy to revoke his public approval of evolution (1895), and the action of the Holy Office in ordering Fr. Zahm to remove his book, *Dogma and Evolution*, from

the market (1899). These acts were executive decisions made in the ordinary course of running the Church, and do not have any doctrinal significance. As noted, nothing like this has happened since 1909, although a fair number of Catholic authors have expressed favorable opinions about evolution (e.g., Dordot, Rüschkamp, Perier, O'Brien, Murray).

The decree of the Biblical Commission, discussed a few pages back, did not exactly speak of the theory of evolution in general. However, its mention of "the special creation of man," Eve, etc., is interwoven into the theological thinking of our preliminary statement, including the statement that the creation of man involves a direct action by God on matter and soul.

In 1941, addressing the members of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, our present Pontiff mentioned the fact that the various biological sciences had not as yet come up with positively clear and certain answers to various questions concerning the origin of Man. However, (foreshadowing his statement in the next document to be analyzed), he leaves it to the science of the future to work out certain answers in an area so important.

The latest, and most important, document regarding this question is the Encyclical of Pius XII, *Humani Generis*. We have already emphasized the fact that an Encyclical is the most important form of the ordinary teaching power and action (*Magisterium*) of the Church. We

shall see how much of our preliminary statement is derived from this Encyclical.

*Humani Generis*, published in 1950, was aimed at pointing out various current errors in philosophy and theology which were dangerous. Thus, mention is made in an early section of materialistic evolution. The other errors are not pertinent to our present discussion, although the Pope's insistence on the importance of the living *Magisterium* is extremely significant for all intellectual Catholics.

In the section specifically dealing with the evolution of Man's body, Pope Pius XII makes the following pronouncements: 1) In our discussion concerning evolution, the fact of the spiritual soul is taken for granted by Catholics. 2) Otherwise, these discussions are left completely free by the Church. 3) However, these discussions are for experts, and should be conducted as such, with reasons pro and con being weighed with scientific maturity, and all discussants ready to submit to the decision of the Church (they would not be Catholics if they were unready so to submit.) 4) People should not act as if evolution were one hundred percent proved (as from the evidence available in 1950, at any rate), and as if there were no further problems involved in synthesizing "science" and Catholic belief.

(b) The dogmatic background for the human soul is quite other than for the question of the evolution of the body. Back in 1312, the Coun-

cil of Vienna, whose decrees were approved by Pope Clement V, defined the doctrine that the intellectual and rational soul was the form of the human body. The word "form" is here used technically, to mean a substantial entity, infused into the body, and making the resulting composite one human being. The Council of the Lateran, in 1513, approved by Leo X, repeated this definition, and added the statement that each human soul was immortal, and decried the doctrine that all humanity had one soul.

In 1887, the Holy Office condemned a number of opinions taken from the writings of Rosmini-Serbati. Among them was one that held that the spiritual soul could have been evolved from an animal vital principle. The decrees of the Holy Office, when approved by the Pope (as these were) are like the decrees of the Biblical Commission, and command the assent of Catholics.

Returning to *Humani Generis*, we note that Pius XII places the doctrine that God immediately creates each human soul among those that Catholic faith teaches. This doctrine has never been formally defined, but belongs to that group of doctrines which Catholics believe, and to deny which would be heresy.

(c) Although the exact doctrine that Adam and Eve were the first parents of all men since their time has never been defined, still one is struck by the fact that all the ecclesiastical documents concerning them take this for granted. The

Council of Carthage in 418; the Council of Orange in 529; and the Council of Trent in 1546—to mention outstanding and ecumenical examples, all speak of original sin, and in this connection of *one* Adam. The Biblical Commission, in 1909, mentions "the unity of the human race" as one of the fundamental doctrines reported in Genesis. All the Scriptural references dealing with our first parents plainly take it for granted that there was one man and one woman.

Pius XII, however, does not so much lean on the Scriptures in drawing up his condemnation of polygenism. He emphasizes the evident irreconcilability of Catholic doctrine concerning original sin with polygenism.

The possibility that there were true men before Adam and Eve, men whose line became extinct (in other words, Preadamites), is allowable. But the Pope does not mention them. In view of the fact that we have no evidence at all concerning their existence, we shall not mention them, either.

It would make an already overburdened article entirely too long, for us to investigate here the Church's teaching concerning original sin, the Redemption by Christ and the redeeming function of the Church as the mystical continuation of Christ. Suffice it to say that these doctrines are absolutely basic to Christianity. We are not, then, dealing with unimportant factors in our concept of Man, and his relations with God.



The Church has the right and the duty of teaching and defending religious truth. This means it has the right to pronounce on anything that has any relationship with this truth. It does not invade the field of science, strictly speaking; thus the Church would not dare to proclaim a certain scientific theory true. But when the theories of scientists enter the realm of the theological, the Church has the right to oppose those theories which are theologically false.

There are three levels of knowledge, the scientific, the philosophical, and the theological. A conflict may develop when people are operating on two different levels, and are not aware of this. Thus, to take an example from cultural anthropology, the ethical relativist proposes the fact that what is considered wrong in one culture is considered right in another. Therefore, he says, there are no such things as absolute norms of morality. With the

word "therefore," he is moving to the philosophical level. The method of philosophy is analytical, and not inductive alone. The absolute norms of morality are independent of the subjective ideas of this or that person or people. Catholic philosophers would, therefore, be objecting not to the scientific findings of ethnology, but to the philosophical thinking which marks the ethical relativist.

Basically, the attitude of the Church, often proclaimed, is that there are two sources of knowledge of truth, Revelation and human reason. Contradictory statements flowing from these two sources cannot both be true; because all truth is of God, and God cannot contradict Himself. If there seems to be a conflict between two truths, then either human reason has gone astray, or perhaps Catholic doctrine is not properly understood by the combatants, or there is no real conflict at all.



## Our Brother's Keeper

Among all the migration movements created by World War II in Europe, during or afterwards, the sudden Hungarian exodus has constituted the biggest movement of Catholic refugees. Yet Catholic organizations have not been alone in coping with the problem. Organizations of many sects, sympathies and denominations have spontaneously shouldered a share of a burden they embraced as their own. In a gesture of human solidarity, it has shown that we are indeed all our brother's keeper.—MIGRATION NEWS, *January-February*, 1957.

*Since the efficient protection of workers' interests in a democratic regime requires association, trade unionism is irreplaceable in our society.*

## Trade Unions in a Free Society\*

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THE creation of the Canadian Labor Congress, or the unification of Canadian labor forces, has placed before public opinion the presence of trade unions as a real power in our country. The favorable reaction across Canada following the publication of our study has shown that the people want to preserve and develop our democratic institutions.

What is the place and role of trade unions in a democracy? That is what I will attempt to discuss with you. Few social phenomena have been as ill-understood and disregarded as trade unionism has been. It is seen through a maze of preju-

dices which hide its true nature, its role and even the growing importance it is taking in the life of the nation.

Nevertheless it is one of the most important phenomena of our times. Its influence spreads to individuals, groups and institutions. It has repercussions in the fields of labor, economy, politics and even religion.

If we wish to estimate briefly the part played by labor unions in a field where there has been no direct action, since we have never had a labor government in this country, let us consider the legislative measures of national importance which

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\*An address to the Railway Brotherhood's Protective Association, Ottawa, Canada, September 3, 1956.

would never have seen the light of day unless labor groups had applied pressure: unemployment insurance, old age pensions, family allowances, compulsory public education, regulations governing working hours, and others. Yet, these measures do not benefit trade union membership alone, but all the workers of the nation.

### Unions Here to Stay

Fought, rejected, tolerated, and misunderstood, trade unionism has continued on its way, changing traditional concepts, influencing the life of all the citizens. One must be blind not to see the importance of this phenomenon and be foolish to reject it as a force one must take into account if one is to have any influence at all in the planning of our future society. It is no longer a matter of taste or sentiment: Trade unions are here to stay.

In a serious review published in Quebec province, an editor last year held that: "Peoples abandoned by a profit-minded elite develop an ever-growing need for security. Labor unions are the most obvious symptom of the failure of the elite and of popular reaction." Is it really true to suggest that if the elite had perfectly carried out its duty and shown greater social sense, trade unions would never have been born? Although this opinion is held and maintained in many circles, I do not believe it is a correct one. It is the "paternalist" thesis. Trade unionism is necessary even where an enterprise is directed by "good employers."

Trade unionism has not always existed and will probably not exist forever. Institutions evolve and change. I am not a prophet. However, within the context of an industrial and democratic civilization, it is a normal phenomenon. It is even an essential one. It is neither a social accessory imposed by the will of some leaders aiming to occupy a position of prestige and financial gain, nor the result of the culpable negligence of bad employers seeking to exploit the workers.

All industrial civilizations lead necessarily to the setting up of a large number of enterprises, some of them of great proportions. Now, there can be no enterprise without workers.

Automation, which is almost here, will only result in a change of jobs or enterprise for the workers. These workers find themselves in the same economic or social situation. They work under similar conditions, obey a similar management, and share a common fate.

For the sake of efficient operation of an enterprise, within a group, it is impossible for the employer to cater to the various whims of individuals. This communal situation leads necessarily to communal interests among workers. An individual cannot bargain over his own conditions. He must accept a standard contract.

How can the interests common to the workers be efficiently safeguarded? In a non-democratic civilization, the State can assume this responsibility: we then have



the regime that exists in Russia or in fascist countries. We may leave the matter to the arbitrary will of employers, as in the good old days of "laissez-faire."

In a democracy, it is up to the interested parties, to all the interested parties, to look after their own affairs, instead of leaving them to be looked after by others.

That is why the efficient protection of workers' interests in a democratic regime requires association. The incompetence of some employer or the ambition of some labor leaders may have been the occasion that led to the establishment of some unions. Nevertheless trade unionism is irreplaceable in an industrial and democratic civilization.

Provoked no doubt by the need to safeguard material interests, trade unions fulfill deeper aspirations, towards the ideals of a complete life shared by a good part of the population and towards the planning of relations between men in the specific labor relations field and in society as a whole. Trade unions are the product of a civilization and at the same time a leaven contributing to its development towards an ideal and structure in greater conformity with the dignity of men.

### Helps Build Democracy

Trade unionism helps to build a democracy because of its function and of the spheres in which it evolves.

The function of trade unionism is to represent the workers, to pro-

mote and defend their specific interests as workers. In addition, and as a result, trade unionism must collaborate with other institutions and educate its membership.

A labor union is the normal spokesman of its members with regards to the employer, government authorities, and the public. Its job is the defense of the workers' interests wherever these may lie.

Its proper sphere of action is the domain of economics. By improving working conditions, regulating labor relations in an enterprise, contributing to ensure security for workers, increasing the standard of living, guarding ever the respect due to the human person, trade unionism accomplishes something for the citizen, for there is little to be distinguished between the worker, the head of a family, and the citizen.

But, precisely because of this coincidence, a labor union cannot make an abstraction of public affairs. Its professional and economic aims inevitably overlap into the political sphere. Job security, full employment, the distribution of national revenue, and the standard of living are matters which affect and interest the entire nation. Economic problems are becoming more and more important in the political sphere. The state's role in the economy of the nation is constantly growing. If state intervention in the field of economy is to be efficient and in conformity with the interests of workers and the nation, persons who hold the reins of public authority must be assisted.

Trade unions play an eminent and useful role in a democracy by making known the view of their membership and also by cooperating with public administration departments. It must be said, however, that until now the positive role that trade unions and employer groups can play in administrative bodies has not been completely understood.

Representations made by workers to the public authorities, as well as membership education programs, already constitute a form of indirect political action long practised in this country.

While remaining in their specific sphere, trade unions can, under certain circumstances, engage in direct political action.

### **Not a Political Party**

A labor union is not a political party and it would be a grave error to confuse one with the other in theory or in practice. A labor union is made up of workers who pursue their collective interests within a society. A political party, on the other hand, is formed of citizens who seek together the best means to achieve the common welfare. It is normal however that a labor union and a political party, which take inspiration from an identical conception of society, work shoulder to shoulder and collaborate effectively to make their common ideal a reality. One must not conclude from this that a political party must become a tool in the hands of a labor union, or that a labor union

may accept to become the plaything of a political party. In one and the other case, the result would be a move toward dictatorship and democracy would cease to function.

The respect of each group's autonomy and a hierarchy of respective aims are absolutely indispensable but they do not close the door to collaboration. In our country this type of collaboration has only reached an embryonic stage. There are many causes, but the political immaturity of the workers themselves and the imperfection of the democratic structure of the traditional parties are the most important.

Trade unions and democracy go together. Trade unionism can develop only in a democracy where there is freedom of expression and association. On the other hand, a true democracy cannot exist or normally grow unless there exist as a link between state and citizens, some social, economic, and professional organizations which play the role of intermediaries. Trade unions constitute one type of such groups.

It is difficult to imagine a democracy with institutions which are not themselves democratic.

### **Must Respect Democracy**

That is why, if we want trade unions to really, not in theory alone, bring something to the democratic way of life of our country, it is necessary that at all levels of their organization they preserve democratic forms and that in their actions towards other groups or their own membership, they respect the values

inherent in the democratic system.

One would have to be blind not to note that labor unions, as all other organized groups in our civilization which tend more and more towards unification and concentration, are slowly building up to gigantic organisms which could endanger democracy if we do not take care.

As a movement becomes an institution, takes on size and importance, its structures become fixed, tasks are divided, and a specialization becomes necessary. Gradually the tasks of management, administration, and even the responsibility of making decisions, become concentrated in the hands of a few persons because these tasks demand a higher degree of competence and more experience. Gradually, the general assembly, which juridically holds the legislative power, becomes a body to which one reports and later simply informs.

This process of concentration of power is not, as is sometimes believed by persons outside trade unionism, exclusively attributable to the thirst for power of leaders, although they contribute sometimes to increase the process in some cases.

### Must Be Solidarity

An administration must be realistic, practical, and efficient; it must look after matters which can only be dealt with in a bureaucratic way. Sometimes the stubborn opposition of employers forces leaders to make quick and firm decisions.

There must be solidarity between members if a union is to function. This need for unity compels the leaders to take the means to prevent unscrupulous or demagogic opposition which would exploit membership dissatisfaction, sometimes encouraged by outside agents.

One must not believe that this process of the centralization of power is a process of usurpation carried out over the opposition of the membership. It comes progressively, imperceptibly, with the passive approbation and consent of the workers. What the worker wants from his union is a good return, protection and service for the union dues he pays. As long as he gets what he expects from his union, he has a tendency to become disinterested in the meetings and administrative problems. This is a phenomenon which has been noted in all other democratic institutions. It has been accepted by shareholders in private enterprise.

But the fact that this situation is easily tolerated elsewhere does not dispense those who want to see the growth of an authentic labor movement from taking measures to ensure that, while taking into account the needs of efficient action, each member is not absorbed in a big machine and, on the other hand, is encouraged to play his role of a responsible and free human being.

Democracy within a union may be jeopardized by practices which do not have the excuse of some objective, if distant, situation. These practices are far from being as



widespread as is generally believed in circles which are ignorant of trade unionism or hostile to it. But it would be hypocritical not to admit their existence. In certain cases, trade unions restrict the admission of members or set up prohibitive initiation fees. In certain unions, there are no elections, and the officers hold an indefinite mandate or it is impossible to oppose them. Sometimes reprisals are carried out against members. Union security, which is in itself legitimate, useful, and commendable, is sometimes used as an excuse to track down honest workers who simply want to exercise, in a democratic way, the rights guaranteed by union regulations or by the law. It might also be pertinent to mention the manner in which, in some cases, union funds are employed.

I repeat, these practices are found only in certain unions, and, curiously enough, they are found in the same trade and the same industries almost all over the world. Moreover, investigations have shown that in each case where a racketeer controls a union he has the support of an employer or a shady politician. And, interesting to note, these racketeers are usually opposed to steady political action on the part of unions.

### ■ Racketeers ■ Cancer

Even if such practices are rare in our country, they are not to be tolerated, because they are a cancer which throws discredit on all organized labor and give an easy pre-

text to the enemies of labor to hamper its normal development.

In their dealings with other groups, unions sometimes could develop a tendency to throw out of balance the relations between various democratic institutions if, because of their economic or political power, they assimilate the common good with the welfare of the class they represent. For the time being, in our country, this is not the case. We cannot however predict what may develop in the future. It will depend, to a large extent, on the manner in which other social classes and institutions will accept the legitimate demands of the working class and help the integration of trade unionism in our society.

Until now, it must be said, trade unionism is finding acceptance only with great difficulty. While almost everyone accepts trade unionism as such, very few are in fact ready to give trade unions their normal place.

There are three causes for the difficulties encountered by trade unions in their efforts to become integrated in society: the character of trade unionism itself, the opposition of traditionalist social forces, the blunders of labor leaders.

Because it is a new institution, trade unionism is not well understood by the public and by the workers themselves. Because it is an institution designed to make demands, a labor union becomes involved in conflicts to safeguard the interests of the workers. While conflicts of interest are considered nor-

mal in all domains, in the labor relations field they are often objected to.

Every new social force clashes with the ancient forces which, through time and tradition, have learned to live together. Traditional social forces such as political parties, financial institutions, and the farming class, in time found a mutually acceptable regime in our country. They accepted each other, upheld each other. The mass of the people, small owners, tradesmen, self-employed workers, civil servants, professionals, reacted and still react sympathetically to these institutions and accept trade unions with difficulty. Consciously or not, they think trade unions are something to league against or to hold in suspicion.

The third cause is the awkwardness or naive nature of certain union tactics. In spite of their honest will to integrate their movement in society, many union leaders lack social psychology in the face of opposition, incomprehension and suspicion. They unconsciously jar public opinion, they do not concern themselves enough with the problem of "good public relations," they do not explain to a sufficient degree the reasons behind their attitudes or actions: such as demands for increased salaries and calling strikes. Often, they confuse what is urgent with what is important.

### Must Be Education

The preservation and the development of democratic methods

within unions are above all the responsibility of union leaders. Because of their function, their competence in technical matters and of their knowledge in the labor field, they have the power and the opportunity of giving their organization a good structure which, at all levels, respects the dignity of the worker and protects his interests. Particularly, they should cooperate for the education of the members of their organizations, for democracy is not only a question of institutions and structures. It is above all a spirit, a sense of responsibility among men, a knowledge and a respect for moral and spiritual values.

There is no true democracy if men are not educated. Recently, we asserted this: "Paradoxical as it may appear, the lure of a golden servitude is perhaps more powerful among men than the love of freedom. For freedom imposes sacrifices and self-denial which one may become easily unable to support. And people who have become enslaved in this way are no longer Christians." This is true for all citizens, even for unionized workers.

Labor organizations, for a long time now, have given importance to the problem of the education of their members. Of all social groups, they are, together with cooperatives, perhaps the ones which each year spend more money than any other for this purpose. They maintain educational services with a specialized staff and invite experts to help them. Although it is necessary for

them to devote many efforts towards training in union techniques—because it is a must for the existence and the functioning of unions—they also have to cooperate to educate the worker in his union and social responsibilities.

It is true that a labor union has neither the right of monopolizing the education of its members nor that of shielding them entirely from all exterior influence. But it is surely one of its responsibilities to cooperate to their civil education with all the means at hand.

About 30 per cent of the workers are unionized in Canada. Now, for the greater part of them, unions are the only organizations in which they have a chance for active participation and in which they may be trained to become group leaders. A truly democratic union which allows freedom of expression, helps the development of the personality

and thus contributes to prepare free citizens.

Let me summarize. In an industrial and democratic civilization, labor unionism appears as a normal and essential institution. Born of democracy, it helps to preserve and develop democratic life. There is, however, an essential condition. It must be itself an institution that really represents the workers and gives them the opportunity of expressing their aspirations while safeguarding their economic and professional interests.

Union democracy is a necessity for the national welfare. But, above all, democracy in the labor movement is the direct responsibility of union leaders who must ensure its maintenance and survival through good institutions and also by their co-operation in the civic education of the rank-and-file trade-union members.



## Going Steady

Three major problems have emerged from the going steady habit. Going steady has warped the natural growth of the boys' and girls' personalities, restricting the many-sided gregarious series of contacts which is necessary to that social being, man, and which is a vital element both in the proper choice of a mate and in preparation for marriage. It leads to a perilous degree of emotional intimacy at too early an age that all too easily ends up in an immoral relationship. It is a factor tending to center young people's interest outside the home, already imperiled by so many forces in the modern society.—*The ENSIGN*, December 15, 1956.



*Catholic critics tend to dismiss Hemingway's works as agnostic, hedonistic, pagan, etc. Yet Catholicism plays an important role in his writing.*

## Hemingway and the Problem of Belief\*

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**D**URING the past twenty-five years a vast amount of criticism has been written about the novels and short stories of Ernest Hemingway. Indeed, so much has been written on the subject that critics are beginning to stumble over each other in repeating this year that which was settled once and for all last year.

With so much critical attention, it is surprising to note that Hemingway's treatment of religion in general and Catholicism in particular has been generally ignored. Both Robert Penn Warren and Joseph Warren Beach have occasionally alluded to the subject, but neither

has considered it at any length. In general those Catholic critics who have treated Hemingway at all seriously have ignored the importance of his treatment of the religious problem of the twentieth century and have dismissed his works with a few safe labels—agnostic, hedonistic, pagan, etc.

Yet Catholicism forms an important part of the texture of Hemingway's early novels and in the overall scheme of his writing its position is an important one.

A consistent attitude-pattern is evident in Hemingway's treatment of Catholicism. The pattern is most ob-

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\*Reprinted from the *Catholic World*, 411 W. 59 St., New York 19, N.Y., October, 1956. A contrasting view of Hemingway's treatment of spiritual values was published in the November, 1955 *CATHOLIC MIND* (p. 681 ss.).

vious if we look at four important novels in chronological order of their stories: *Farewell to Arms*, *The Sun also Rises*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, *Across the River and into the Trees*. (*The Old Man and the Sea* is quite a different thing though, and while I believe it is fundamentally consistent with the pattern, it is in several ways a much more subtle and difficult book than the others and demands a more extensive treatment than is possible in this very limited discussion.)

The most obvious thing to be noted about the treatment of Catholicism in these four books is that they all feature as the central figure an American set against the background of a predominantly Catholic culture and society. Jake Barnes and Robert Jordan are in Spain; Frederick Henry and Colonel Cantwell are in Italy. In each case, we see a more or less disoriented modern American in a setting of traditional culture where the society embraces Christian values.

Often, it seems to me, Hemingway readers and critics become so engrossed in the central figures in these novels that they overlook the fact that this Catholic atmosphere is handled with great respect, knowledge, and care. Though Frederick Henry and the rest are presented as persons existing in something of a value-vacuum, the values and beliefs of the traditional culture are never treated as anything but desirable, beautiful and, at least by implication, good.

It is disturbing to read so much

Catholic criticism that ignores this important fact. The priest friend of Frederick Henry, the religious nature of the Pamplona holyday-holiday, the deeply grained religious attitudes of the members of El Sordo's band who begin by shouting Communist slogans and die invoking the help of the Blessed Virgin, are all treated sympathetically and with respect.

In these novels, members of the Catholic society emerge by contrast as human beings in a desirable state of spiritual security. I do not mean to go so far as to say that Hemingway necessarily intends these novels as affirmations of the *truth* of Catholicism, but neither are the novels in any way a denial of that truth. Rather, he seems to say that for those for whom faith is an actuality life is a great deal more satisfying than it is for those who do not believe. The priest in *Farewell to Arms* longs to return to the Abruzzi where a man's love of God is no dirty joke. We have the feeling that the priest in Abruzzi will lead a peaceful, satisfying life, but we have no such feeling about Frederick after he walks home in the rain.

### The Central Characters

The gift of faith is generally denied the Hemingway central character, but his sympathetic treatment of those who possess it indicates that the author is not asserting or denying the validity of belief so much as he is exploring the problem of those who either do not or cannot believe.

The central figures in these novels are progressively less and less concerned with this problem of belief. It would seem that this diminishing concern with religion grows out of a more varied experience in each character over the experience of the preceding characters.

In other words, each novel builds on the preceding one and somewhere in the background of each character is the experience of the others who have come before. The earliest characters are much concerned with the question and, having failed to solve it satisfactorily, they pass on to their successors a kind of refusal to devote their lives to its contemplation. Their successors then turn to the examination of other values.

Although *The Sun also Rises* preceded *Farewell to Arms* in publication, the latter novel is the chronological beginning of the story. Frederick Henry, young and, at the beginning of the book uninitiated, tells us, "I had no religion . . ." But Frederick also admits that he fears God. When asked if he is *croyant*, a believer, he answers, "At night." And when Count Greffi asks Frederick to pray for him, Frederick answers, "I might become very devout . . . Anyway, I will pray for you." Later, when Catherine is dying, Frederick prays with an intensity born of desperation. His prayers are not answered; he walks home in the rain fully initiated into the Hemingway world of pain, death, sorrow and despair.

Religion-wise, the important thing to note about Frederick Henry is

that he apparently has no formal religion, but he does not discount the possibility that at some future time he might adopt one. He keeps himself aloof from religious matters, at the same time displaying a distant but positive respect for the priest and his religion. Further, there is oblique evidence that Frederick basically wants to become a Christian.

As has been pointed out elsewhere ("Modern Literature," in *The Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, Aug., 1953, pp. 972-977), the symbolic meaning of the famous Abruzzi passage can hardly be understood in any other terms than a deep-seated desire on Frederick's part to embrace the cleanness of Christianity in general and, since it is intimately associated with the priest, probably Catholicism in particular. Frederick's experience with the pain of life might well lead him to a sober consideration of his need for faith.

Something of this sort of thing apparently does happen, for Jake Barnes in *The Sun also Rises* tells us early in the book that he is a "technical Catholic." (The fact that Jake is quite obviously a continuation and extension of the personality of Frederick Henry has been demonstrated so many times by modern critics that we will not concern ourselves with proof here.)

When pushed for an explanation of "technical Catholic" Jake admits that he does not know what the phrase means. Nevertheless we know that he goes to confession, attends Mass, believes in the validity of



prayer, and considers Catholicism a very desirable institution. Which is not to say that he is what is popularly known as a "good Catholic."

What has happened seems to be that Frederick Henry, disillusioned by the traditional values of love, glory, honor, etc., has, in Jake Barnes, turned to religion. But his past experience with abstractions has made him suspicious of all things unless they can be tested by the senses. And so Jake expects of his religion two things: a desirable emotional effect and immediate concrete results. In keeping with these two objectives or tests, he regrets that he cannot "feel" religious and he prays only for temporal things.

### Disordered Modern Man

Jake's position is a dramatic commentary on the thinking of the disordered modern man. In a number of ways he subscribes to the pragmatism of William James and to the emotionalism of enthusiasm. Finding that Catholicism in these terms does not "work" for him, that it does not provide the desirable emotional and practical results, Jake regrets that he is such a "rotten Catholic" and pathetically hopes that someday he may "feel religious."

Of course he is seeking entirely the wrong things from Catholicism and it is inevitable that he will be disappointed. But his search should not be futile as far as the reader is concerned. Here is the intensely personal presentation of one of the great ideological conflicts and confusions of our century.

It is difficult to see how the perceptive reader can miss the pathos of this confusion, can fail to see its significance in terms of an added understanding of our society.

Robert Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is something a bit different from Jake or Frederick Henry. He is an extension of them; he has, in one sense, gone beyond their position. Robert Jordan retains most of Jake's values. He still uses the pragmatic approach in search of the experience of enthusiasm. But the object of the enthusiasm has shifted. Apparently he, like Jake, was once a Catholic. Thinking of the experience of fighting for what he considers to be Liberty and Equality, he tells us, "You felt, in spite of all the bureaucracy and inefficiency and party strife, something that was like the feeling you expected to have and did not have when you made your first Communion." (It could be argued that this phrase alone would only indicate Jordan had belonged to some Christian religion which emphasized the importance of Communion, not necessarily Catholicism. In the light of Jake's Catholicism, though, and the intensity of the expectation of feeling, Catholicism is pretty well indicated.) Just as Jake regretted that he did not "feel religious," Jordan was disappointed because Communion did not produce the expected emotional reaction.

Throughout the book, however, Robert Jordan displays a great respect for the Catholicism of the Spanish people. But he has appar-

ently abandoned his own belief. He dies without a prayer. It would seem that Jake has moved through Jordan to an awareness of the futility of the search for the enthusiastic response in religion and rather than change his norms for evaluating experience he has changed the object from which he expects the experience. In other words, he has substituted social good for spiritual good and seems to find in his identification with the social movement the excitement and satisfaction he vainly sought in religion.

The difficulty some readers have in thoroughly understanding Jordan's switch with its apparent truth comes, I believe, because he dies at the end of the book. His identification with the social movement is quite naturally a satisfying thing, but its appeal would necessarily be short-lived. However, he dies before the transient nature of this feeling becomes apparent.

For Jordan, the quiet day by day perseverance demanded by religion is no match for the excitement of martyrdom for a social cause. To see the results of this attitude over an extended period one must look at Colonel Cantwell in *Across the River and into the Trees*.

Experience-wise, Cantwell is Jake and Frederick and Robert. Cantwell is old, a dying man. He no longer possesses the illusions. He turns to sex, alcohol, and sport even in his dying moments. He dies with no thought of God, religion, eternity and without Jordan's excitement of martyrdom. With the foolishness of

his immaturity and the stoicism born of disillusion he is a most pathetic and stupid old man.

The cycle comes complete with Cantwell, and in the completeness is the truth of modern man that makes Hemingway a great writer. The search of Hemingway's characters is a search for the wrong end. He does not try to delude his readers into believing this search is successful or that it satisfies in the long haul. Cantwell, Barnes, and Henry are left empty and unhappy; only Jordan experiences the satisfaction and he does not live long enough to put to the test the validity of his belief.

Two things emerge as important from this perspective on Hemingway's presentation of the value problem. First, anyone acquainted with the thinking and search of modern society for secure values must see in these novels a true presentation of this search. An awareness of the plight of Hemingway's characters can contribute a great deal to our understanding of the search. It is difficult for me to understand the position of the moralist critics who condemn Hemingway's writing as hedonistic, agnostic, or pagan when Hemingway presents with such truth and exactness the inevitable results of such beliefs.

Second, the contrast between these disoriented people and the devout Catholics who move as secondary characters in the novels is a profound one. Here again he has written carefully and with truth.

*If, in true Christian tradition, Catholics can become Hindus in order to save them, it is more likely that Hindus will become Christians to save themselves.*

## The Church and the New Asia<sup>\*</sup>

ANTHONY J. PAREL, S.J.

THE revolutionary changes that are sweeping across the mission countries of Asia, particularly India, are alarming enough for the politicians of the world. They are even more so for the missionary, since they involve the supernatural destiny of so many millions of people. The breakdown of colonialism, the challenge to the West, and the attraction to communism are some of the main aspects of the new change. But beneath these apparent manifestations of new life lies the real cause—consciousness of the equality and dignity of man irrespective of accidental differences in color, wealth, power and technical progress.

It would be a grave mistake to consider the new changes as merely

political, and to react to them as though they did not arise from something deeper than a political philosophy. Political changes are but the result of a profound psychological change. Just as colonialism succeeded in Asia because of the then-existing psychological attitude of the Asians toward the West, so it broke down with the change in the psychological climate.

### Nature of the New Change

If the missionary is to react to these changes sensibly, it is important that he evaluate them in their more complex form. It would be wrong to view the new attitude as hostile to the West and to everything that the West stands for. There is no hostility but only a challenge,

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<sup>\*</sup>Reprinted from *Worldmission*, 366 Fifth Ave., New York 1, N.Y., Summer, 1956.



a challenge which comes, not from envy or ambition, but from the consciousness of the injustice suffered at the hands of the colonizer. It is to be noted, however, that not all countries of Asia are affected in the same way. The intensity of the reaction depends on the personality of each country, its past history and present vitality. But, in spite of variations in intensity, that bare minimum of desire for equality with the West is visible everywhere. Some countries may be satisfied with compromise such as equal citizenship. Others may go further and demand complete political and economic autonomy. Finally there are those who by-pass any intermediary stages and for whom freedom means self-determination not only in the political and economic, but above all in the cultural sphere. Wherever freedom is understood in this profound meaning the reaction to the West is more vital and perhaps even violent.

### India—a Typical Example

Although the new consciousness is something generic and admits of various shades and gradations, we shall study it in its extreme and aggravated form. India offers an excellent field for such a study, not only because of her strong nationalism but also because of her cultural mission in south-east Asia, and the constructive way she is reacting to the new changes. Unlike China, India has recognized freedom as an essential

condition for self-expression. She intends to achieve that self-expression neither through regimentation and force, nor through the adoption of an alien system. The accent is on self-help and her own particular genius. As Nehru has declared, India has a soul and mind of her own, not of today but of 2,500 years. "Why should we not think along our own lines," he asks, "keeping in view the conditions of our own country?"

The example of other countries might have lessons for India, but their use of methods of violence to bring about economic revolution has become outdated. There was no reason why India should import conflict in the name of socialism. Whether in the political or economic sphere if "we merely become some kind of a pale reflection of somebody else's thinking or action, we do no credit to ourselves or to others."<sup>1</sup>

Nehru was referring to the task of India's economic reconstruction. Nevertheless, the spirit in which that problem is approached gives us a sufficient indication of how the more important problem of a new cultural synthesis will be handled. That India is changing is beyond all doubt. Doubtless too is the determination to preserve her identity, and not to lose her soul in the changing process.

### The Missionary Involved

The spirit of the Hindu brings to

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<sup>1</sup> From a recent speech, as reported in the *Indiagram*, December 30, 1955, and January 20, 1956.

focus the real problem which the missionary is facing. With the advent of independence, he has liberated himself from many unhealthy political alliances. Will he liberate himself also from undesirable cultural alliances as well? How will he react to this new situation? What does the Hindu think of him? What importance does the Hindu attach to the role which the missionary wants to play on the national scene? How will he break the cultural barriers? Unless these questions find their proper answers the missionary enterprise will become more and more futile in the days to come.

No doubt the missionary has elected to stay in the country of adoption and to serve its people with zeal and efficiency. His heroism, however, has not helped much to open the eyes of the Hindus. The prejudice that Christianity is foreign still lingers, perhaps not as an unthinking emotion, but at least in a sophisticated and rationalized form. The intellectual leaders who are working for the cultural regeneration of their country often consider Christianity as an indifferent if not anti-national agent. In their view, Christianity in its alien garb is incapable of contributing anything to the new synthesis without at the same time destroying the beauty and the distinctive feature of the Indian culture. ■

Gandhi's remarks are typical as

they come from the very embodiment of the new spirit. "Whilst a boy," he writes in his memoirs, "I heard it being said that to become a Christian was to have a brandy bottle in one hand and beef in the other. Things are better now, but it is not unusual to find Christianity synonymous with denationalization and Europeanization."<sup>2</sup>

It must be borne in mind that when the average Hindu speaks of Christianity, more often than not he has in mind its Protestant version. For him the differences between Catholics and Protestants are not so obvious. Protestant or Catholic, Christianity is a relic of colonialism and nothing more. However there have been exceptions like Nehru who has observed:

In India the Church of England has been almost indistinguishable from the Government . . . That Church has served the purposes of British imperialism and given both capitalism and imperialism a moral and Christian covering. It has sought to justify from the highest ethical standards, British predatory policy in Asia and Africa . . . Protestantism . . . wanted to have the best of both worlds . . . It succeeded remarkably so far as this world was concerned, but from the religious point of view it fell . . . between two stools and religion gradually gave place to sentimentality and big business. Roman Catholicism escaped this fate . . . and it will flourish.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately not many who study

■ *The Mahatma and the Missionary*, Selected Writings of M. K. Gandhi, Henry Regnery Co., Chicago, 1949, pgs. 123-124.

■ Autobiography of Jawaharlal Nehru, 12th printing, 1937, published 1936, John Lane, the Bodley Head, London, pp. 375-76.

the missionary question are as objective as Nehru. Most of them but repeat what Gandhi had said: "Christian missionaries came to India under the shadow, or if you like, under the protection of a temporal power, and it created an impassable bar."<sup>4</sup>

Of course the coming of independence has helped to remove this bar. Nevertheless, the animus against the missionary persists, and that in spite of his unselfish services, rendered and often recognized as such. It is not enough therefore merely to plead that his intentions are noble, that his mission is divine, nor is the accidental severing of ties with political alliances sufficient. The proportionate psychological and cultural change also must take place.

The problem today, then, is one of adjusting temper and attitude to the new situations, not by this or that individual missionary but by the entire Christian world. For as Cardinal Gracias points out, our case suffers prejudice because of what is happening in the international sphere. Christianity in India is judged—unfortunately—not so much by the vigor of the belief and practice of the Christians in the country, but by the role played in international life by nations reputed to be Christian.<sup>5</sup>

### Radical Changes Necessary

As we have already mentioned, the new spirit in India is affecting not only the political but also the

cultural and religious life of the country. Consequently, whatever is foreign, precisely because it is foreign, is looked upon with disfavor or accepted only after thorough Indianization. Therefore we can view freedom from political alliances as only a negative condition for the growth of Christianity in India. Cultural neutralism can result in mere stagnancy of the Church. Indeed, if it remains culturally Western in essence, it will be rejected. Only a more positive approach to the Indian culture can insure its steady growth.

Of course, one might say, "Christianity is universal; it can grow on any soil." But somehow we fail to get this idea across to our non-Christian friends. Is it perhaps we ourselves who are not fully convinced of what we say? Before we can persuade others that Christianity is as much Eastern as it is Western, we need to convince ourselves that it is really so. That means we shall have to rediscover in a practical and workable manner the applicability of the Gospel message to all cultures. As it is, this fact lies submerged by the accretions of accidental historical events.

If the Christianity of today, enmeshed in the noble traditions of Greece and Rome, is to become the Christianity of tomorrow, the one that will survive colonialism and react vitally in culturally vital areas, then the first need may be to admit

<sup>4</sup> *The Mahatma and the Missionary*, p. 120.

<sup>5</sup> *The Clergy Monthly Supplement*, October, 1953, p. 270, Kurseong, India.



that in its present cultural form it is not universal. What exists today will have to act as the antithesis and meet half-way other naturally good and living cultures, to form the synthesis. If this be possible, as indeed it should be, then can the missionary give the lie to the assertion that Christianity is foreign in India; then will the Hindu realize that the acceptance of what in theory lies beyond East and West—Christ, Christian morals and beliefs—will not come to mean in practice the acceptance of something that is solely Western.

No doubt the missionary enterprise received a new impetus since the days of the great Encyclicals *Rerum Ecclesiae* and *Maximum Il-lud. Evangelii Praecones* in its turn has given new directions and opened new vistas for the missionary as it spoke of cultural assimilation and penetration of the national soul. More than a mere change of personnel, however, is needed to establish the Church on a cultural basis. It is very helpful to have an indigenous clergy. But we can have all the native priests and bishops we want and still fail to achieve our goal. There is in India for instance, a very ancient, indigenous Church—the Syrian Church of the St. Thomas Christians, with nearly two million faithful in its fold. Yet even after nineteen centuries, its cultural influence on the soul of the nation is very negligible. This kind of cultural neutralism may prove more harmful in the future than political alliance in the past.

### A Problem to be Reckoned With

At once we are confronted with a problem: is it possible at all to speak of a specifically Asiatic culture or about its survival in an atomic age? Has not the Western culture become universal, leaving room for no other? The question is by no means easy of solution. Authorities like Toynbee foresee that the spread of technocracy will pave the way for the acceptance of Christianity in the East. The argument is that the adoption of an outer form of life will necessitate the adoption of the inner form from which it arose. However cogent this argument may be, many thinkers do not look at the problem from this angle at all. As a matter of fact, the adoption of technocracy by Japan has not made her a Christian nation. Add to this the scientific progress made by Soviet Russia, Nazi Germany and the bold bid which Red China is making today toward progress in technocracy.

Moreover, Hindu thinkers consider technocracy as something universal, as science or mathematics, and therefore the property of humanity in general. "To speak of ideas," says Dr. Radhakrishnan, "as belonging to this or that community was to violate their character as ideas. Ideas were universal, though they might arise in individuals and develop their power through communities. The constructive ideas on which civilization was built were conventually traced to this or that country—Greece or Rome, China or India.

There was, however, an old Talmudic saying. The Rabbis asked why was the Law given in the wilderness and the answer was given, in order that no one country could claim property rights over it. This was true of all ideas."<sup>6</sup> Thus the necessity of embracing Christianity as a condition for the adoption of technocracy is excluded. Indeed, if Toynbee's theory were true we would have to embrace the religion of the primitive since we owe to him the invention of so many things.

But even if Western culture were accepted together with technocracy, we might still doubt how such an event could help the spreading of the Gospel. There is every reason to suspect that in so far as modern scientific culture is non-Christian in tone, instead of being a help it can prove a hindrance. The decadence of present-day materialism and its moral vacillation lie heavily on the conscience of the West. The East still considers the West as being Christian, and puts the evils as well as the good at its door. Consequently the use of scientific progress as an argument for Christianity is bound to be weak both theologically and psychologically. Some had used it in the past, but succeeded only in evoking this retort from Mahatma Gandhi:

The teaching of Jesus should not be confused with what passes for modern civilization. It is no part of the missionary call to tear the life of the people of

the East by its roots. Tolerate what is good in that life and do not hastily, with preconceived notions, judge it. In spite of your belief in the greatness of Western Civilization and in spite of your pride in your achievements, I plead with you for humility . . . A time is coming when those who are in the mad rush of today of multiplying their wants, vainly thinking that they can retrace their steps, will say, "What have we done?" Civilizations have come and gone, and in spite of all our vaunted progress I am tempted to ask again, "To what purpose?" . . . Let us by all means drink deep in the fountains that are given to us in the Sermon on the Mount, but then shall we have to take the sackcloth and ashes . . . You cannot serve both God and Mammon.<sup>7</sup>

In fact, at times it is even necessary to start the exposition of historical Christianity with an apology for the West. We have the unpleasant task of explaining how colonialism, materialism, anti-clericalism, secularism, and, may we add, Protestantism ever arose in the Christian West, and how Europe came to give up her own Christian traditions. It is well to remember that Europe is known in the East mainly through its heresies. Consequently, it would be much better for orthodox Christianity, if technocracy—the heretical culture of the West—did not appear in the East in the name of Christianity.

Can the Catholic missionary wait till the day Europe will be re-Christianized? It would be unwise to

<sup>6</sup> From a recent speech as reported in *the Statesman*, Calcutta, December 26, 1955.

<sup>7</sup> *The Mahatma and the Missionary*, pp. 123-34.

do so, especially if we are to take into consideration the missionary ambitions of Protestantism itself and the global aspirations of communism. Add to this, the attempts, feeble and esoteric, which Hindu intellectuals are making to interpose Hinduism as the religion of the future. They think that as a directive principle, Christianity is dead, that is, it is incapable of giving ballast and poise to a storm-tossed humanity.

"Can the materialistic outlook of Western culture save the modern world?" asks an inquiring Indian intellectual. His answer is, No, because "it is of the earth and earthly, of the flesh and fleshly; it has no inner soul, no spiritual urge behind it. Its Churchills and Trumans, its Hitlers and Mussolinis cannot change the face of the world, nor establish abiding peace."<sup>8</sup>

What our enthusiastic thinker forgets is that Europe has lost its soul only in the measure that it has lost Christianity; that all it needs to live again is the return to its faith. But what is really original and a trifle amusing is his own solution: "If any country can save the modern world," he assures us, "it is India and India alone." If this solution leaves us rather cold, it should at least serve one purpose: to show which way the wind is blowing, and which way minds are working and on what information they are being fed.

The knowledge of Western cul-

ture is superficial in India. It is acquired mainly through uninspiring movies, cheap literature, and the cheaper philosophies of Darwin, Huxley, Voltaire, or Freud. Indian intellectuals are influenced by Western leaders in thought and letters who have lost their own Christian faith, and consequently when they speak of the contributions of Christianity to the making of the West, will refer to the Middle Ages as the dark period, to Scholasticism as a break in progress, and to the Church as an outmoded system. The cumulative effects of all this on the younger generation awakening to the new life of their country is very distressing. It becomes part of their subconscious and intellectual prepossessions to think that spiritually the West is dead and that it has nothing to suggest to the East. And should such a prejudice gain more ground, Christianity's chances of being the antithesis for India's new synthesis will be very small.

### Inadequacy of the Old Bottles

The optimism of national ambition, the emptiness of materialism and the eager desire to catch up with the rest of the world, have stimulated the Hindu's spiritual susceptibilities. That is why his diagnosis is so correct: "nothing of the earth and earthly" can change the face of the earth. But the remedy he suggests may aggravate the malady rather than cure it. There

<sup>8</sup> Razaul Karim, "India Message to the World," an article published in the *Modern Review*, Calcutta, December, 1954, pp. 533, 538.



would be nothing but disappointment for him were he to seek the new "mystique" in something which would still be earthly. We admit: Hinduism is a sincere approach to God; it tries to make men detached from things earthly. But for all that it does not cease to be a thing of the earth—even when it tries to transcend the earthly.

The prerogative of Christianity is just the opposite: even when it tries to deal with the earthly, it remains in essence heavenly—"not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." To whatever heights Hinduism may soar, it cannot transcend the natural sphere, the take-off is still from a human base, the propelling force is derived not from God's special grace, but from the human intellect, will, and emotions. If only the Hindu could decide to draw his energies from the divine fount, not only would he not be disappointed but he would succeed in the mission of the spiritual regeneration of the world, for which he feels naturally inclined. But he must have the courage and wisdom to give up the old bottles and to replace them by new ones. Otherwise the new wine in India would be wasted and Indian culture will go on indefinitely in its lassitude.

It is here that the missionary can be of immense service to the Hindu, provided he too has given up his old bottles to contain the new wine. If he can remove the cultural trappings he has put on the Gospel message and present Christianity in its

eternal freshness and purity, the sincere Hindu cannot but be helped. This "dispossessing" of oneself is a hard task, especially since the missionary is the product of what is best in true Christian humanism. The temptation to ask the Hindu to follow his own example will be there. But it will have to be overcome.

It is the growth of Christ in the Hindu consciousness that has to be promoted. For this he will have to proclaim in unequivocal terms that the excellence of Christianity does not come from its association with the West, but solely from its living union with Christ, the Word made flesh, the Co-Eternal Son of the Absolute. He may have to preach from the house-tops that the Christianity he is propagating is not the Christianity of Clive or Kipling, but of St. John and Paul of Tarsus. If he can do this, he will be casting away his own bottles and the Hindu will consider giving up his own.

The policies of the past served the missionary when different conditions existed. Under the changed circumstances they no longer find place. In the past he had only to give, to teach, and the pagan had only to accept and to learn. The attempts of Ricci and De Nobili were considered too progressive, as they did not fit in with a mentality that was molded by colonialism. As Nehru remarked, a little vehemently perhaps, the average missionary was wholly ignorant of India's past history and culture and did not take the slightest trouble to find out

what they were. He was more interested in pointing out the sins and failings of the heathen.<sup>9</sup> Or as Gandhi observed, "missionaries come to India thinking they come to a land of heathens, of idolaters, of men who do not know God."<sup>10</sup> Whether these statements are true or not, if the missionary does not keep in mind the prejudice behind them, he will be unable to find the proper answer to his problems.

### The Missionary Task

In *Evangelii Praecones* the Holy Father insists that missionary efforts should be to fulfill rather than destroy, to transform rather than replace the native cultures. Significantly the Pope quotes St. Basil, who was writing about the contributions of the Egyptians and the Chaldeans to the general scheme of the Universal Redemption.

Moses, a man of great renown for his wisdom, is said to have come to the contemplation of Him Who is, only after being trained in the Egyptian lore. So later the wise Daniel is said to have been first schooled in Babylon in the wisdom of the Chaldeans and only then to have come to know Divine Revelations.<sup>11</sup>

The passage speaks for itself. Would it be too much to say that just as Egypt and Chaldea contributed their share to the plan of salvation of mankind, so India and China can contribute theirs? The problem is to find what these con-

tributions, what the theological finality of Hinduism or Buddhism may be. Before we can satisfy the Hindu about the Gospel message, we will have to explain to him what the message of Buddha or Shankara means. For when we lecture to a Hindu Pundit on St. Thomas, he is not worried whether the Angelic Doctor is right, but whether his own "Doctors" were wrong.

To find the theological finality of these systems may require generations of saints and scholars. The work-a-day missionary has neither the time nor the inclination for such work. Specialists will have to guide his path. From now on therefore the work *ad paganos* should be as much the concern of Catholic theologians and intellectuals as of the worker in the actual mission field. The concept of a missionary being an adventurer to some unknown land, and the mission enterprise as a scheme for collecting money will have largely to be modified. Valiant humanitarian efforts need the still more valiant support of scholarship and positive efforts of culture-assimilation. Otherwise the very works of mercy will be taken out of their context and wrongly interpreted by those who are already suspicious about the missionary's aims.

In the past Christianity approached similar cultural problems with courage and vision. The break-

<sup>9</sup> *Autobiography of Jawaharlal Nehru*, p. 375.

<sup>10</sup> *The Mahatma and the Missionary*, p. 117.

<sup>11</sup> St. Basil, *Ad Adolescentes*, 2, MG. XXXI, 567 A.

ing away from Judaization, the patronage of Greco-Roman Classics, the transformation of Hellenism are so many sign-posts along the road which Christianity took in its pilgrimage through the centuries. Universities like Paris and Padua, under the guidance of Christian Saints, introduced the wisdom of Plato and Aristotle and interpreted their theological finality. With that novel work done, has Christianity exhausted its transforming power? If not, where among the Catholic centers of learning, in Seminaries or Universities, in the East or in the West, is there a fully equipped faculty for the study of Eastern philosophies? And yet it is these philosophies that determine the thinking and thought process of the millions who are potential members of the Mystical Body.

### The Initiative Wrested

In painful contrast to Catholic apathy, secular scholars are showing great enthusiasm in these matters. Eastern thought is appearing in the West through modern Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard or Berlin. Such studies are promoted out of mere academic interest. But the effects of the spreading of these ideas through secular channels are harmful, and are already being felt. How often we hear about ex-Christians who

claim they have found repose and solace in Yoga or Nirvana! Popularized Indian and Buddhist ideas are artificially blended and taken out of their Christian context the better to suit the de-Christianized Western intellectual tastes. It is almost a mark of scholarship to hold the basic equality of all religions and to talk about Buddha, Socrates, and Jesus as equally great religious geniuses.

The task before the missionary then is urgent, new and difficult. On the one hand he has to uphold the transcendence of Christianity; on the other its absolute independence of the West and adaptability to the East. Theoretically there is no problem, as Catholics agree that Christianity is universal. But the practical success in carrying out that theory depends in large measure on the lead and guidance of the influential Catholic leaders of the West. Isolated efforts can achieve but little in a world that witnesses so much centralization.

If the universal spirit of Christianity can break through the man-made cultural barriers, then the future of both the East and West is assured. If in true Christian tradition Catholics can become Hindus in order to save them, it is more likely that Hindus will become Catholics to save themselves.



*The very term liturgy indicates that the spirit of the art should reflect the spirit of official worship itself, the spirit of the Church praying.*

# The Meaning of Liturgical Arts\*

JOHN LAFARGE, S.J.

*Associate Editor, AMERICA*

THE LITURGICAL Arts Society is so used to confronting the future that it's rather difficult for the chaplain to turn his head around and peer into the past. Twenty-five years looks like a long time, and it's still longer if I try to recall the first germinations of the liturgical arts idea.

## Story of the Society

It wasn't a sudden inspiration but a notion that came spontaneously to quite a number of people—architects, artists, some clergymen, educators—who were pretty deeply impressed by the deplorable situation of Cath-

olic religious art in this country. Like many fruitful ideas, it grew from an irritant, a sort of blemish on the fair face of the Church. For the past one hundred years the Catholic Church has produced an astonishingly large number of really beautiful churches, fine architecture, sculpture, decoration, but the wax-doll type of statuary and other spurious types of ornamentation have persisted.

In 1926-27 a small group of architects began to discuss among themselves as to what *could* really be done. They became aware of the necessity of doing something

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\*Reprinted from *Liturgical Arts*, December, 1956.

positive instead of indulging in the usual recriminations as to what was wrong with the religious art and architecture of the Catholic Church.

During meetings and three-day retreats at Portsmouth Priory, Portsmouth, R.I., various ideas were threshed out. Some were of the opinion that artists should band together in isolation in some form of a semi-contemplative community so as to recreate Catholic art from the inside out of their seclusion. Eric Gill and Ditchling exerted their influence. The contemplatives would be supported, presumably, by wealthy persons, if such were available, and then wait for the public to call for their services.

Others of a more practical turn of mind thought that any amelioration of present conditions hinged on doing the best possible within the limits of their present work. They chose a different course, that of remaining within their own sphere of professional action and within the limits of what appeared to be present possibility. They would work from the inside of their respective crafts and professions. This brought the whole idea down to a somewhat prosaic basis but launched the liturgical-arts project on a path from which it has never deviated.

Organization meetings followed at Campion House, the editorial headquarters of *America* magazine, where the question was further discussed. As a result, another meeting was held in the studio of Mrs. Hildreth Meiere, at which time it was decided

that a national magazine, a quarterly, fully illustrated, was the necessary element in any further work of any organization such as the Liturgical Arts Society. Accordingly, Harry Lorin Binsse was chosen as the magazine's first editor and the society's executive secretary because of his knowledge of printing practices and his appreciation of the norms underlying the *idea* of the society.

It is a tribute to Harry Binsse's taste and typographical skill that the format of the quarterly has never changed during these twenty-five years, something certainly not true of most of the quarterly's contemporaries in the field of Catholic publications. When Mr. Binsse felt himself obliged to resign as executive secretary of the society and editor of the quarterly, he was succeeded by Maurice Lavanoux, still happily continuing in this work. To Mr. Lavanoux' utterly unselfish devotion and his genius the magazine owes its present unique and high standard.

The early years of the magazine's existence were handicapped by a lack of suitable material, so that it leaned heavily upon material which now seems to have been of archeological value but of little relation to present-day needs. The society, like many non-profit organizations, can look back on the glamorous years when dinners and other functions to raise money were taken as a matter of course by many whose sole interest was showing off at such meetings. These years were followed by those less glamorous years when

the main problem was the work of continuity.

As time went on, the universal character of the Church was more and more realized and opportunities were offered to the secretary, through the generosity of a private foundation, to study the activities in the realm of religious art and architecture in other countries. In time this universal interest of the society's editorial function yielded interesting outlooks and widened the scope of the society's activities.

### Meaning of the Movement

As the years have gone on and the society has had to explain its project more and more in detail to the public, it has clarified in its own mind just what such a movement means. Essentially it is to create a climate in which all the different elements can collaborate in producing art worthy of the spirit of the Church.

What the society would like to do, as far as possible, is to encourage that spirit of cooperation between all factors in the process of construction and decoration which are favorable to truly creative work. It has been particularly interested in trying to close the gap between the patron or employer and the artist; to help the artist to understand the needs of the patron—which in this case is the Church as represented by those who engage in ecclesiastical building or educational construction or other forms of institutions—and those who wish to give their talents to the service of the Church but are uncertain as to how to go about it.

It has been the society's persistent hope that the development of such a climate will help to solve the vexing problem of commercialized art vs. pure private initiative.

Anyone who recalls the enormous annual amount of construction in this country realizes that the commercial firms are a necessity. We cannot do without them. But as such a climate of cooperation develops it will reflect itself on the commercial firms themselves, on the quality of their work and, what is more, on the spirit and attitude that they take towards the initiative of private talent.

### Art Serving the Church

Experience, too, has helped to clarify our thought as to what liturgical art really means. The term itself seems capable of stirring up many emotions pro or con. After all, liturgical art *is* liturgical, i.e., the movement which the society represents is not concerned primarily with works of art that are within the sphere of Christianity but it is concerned with art at the service of the Church, the Church's official worship.

This simple proposition, however, is very comprehensive. It would include such features as the altar, its construction, its location, all its appurtenances, the sanctuary, the sacred vessels and vestments, the relation of the altar to the congregation. It would also include the building that houses Christian worship, not only the altar and the sacred Eucharistic Sacrifice but the adminis-



tration of the other Sacraments, such as Baptism and the Sacrament of Penance, the font and the confessional. It includes the treatment of the choir, of the pulpit, of the Communion rail, and so on from the standpoint of the requirements of worship itself. In addition to this there are the claims of public and private devotion in the way of statutory, decoration, etc. These are somehow related to the Church's official worship.

But liturgical art is more than this. The very term liturgy indicates that the spirit of the art which the society encourages should reflect by its very nature not only rubrical correctness but the spirit of that official worship itself, the spirit of the Church praying. Thus the liturgical-arts movement is an expression of the love of the Church which if properly understood is love for the Lord Christ Himself; love for the Heavenly Father, for whose honor and glory Our Saviour founded the Church, and love for the Holy Spirit who is forever proclaiming the Father's glory within the Church unto the end of time.

Guided then by this churchly spirit, liturgical art works in harmony with the directives of our Holy Father and the Sacred Congregations. These are matters on which the Church has spoken with great precision and detail. Hence the importance of knowing what the Church *has* really said: what has been determined by the Holy Father, what the Sacred Congregations have laid down, and what

has been left for determination by the local Ordinary. Where the Church has clearly designated that certain matters are left to his care, his decisions are as binding as if the Church Universal spoke. But in matters of purely artistic taste, Church authorities may differ like anyone else, and not infrequently do.

### Styles, Pro and Con

It is not the idea of the liturgical-art movement to dogmatize on schools or types of art, to be attached to any one so-called style. On such matters the Holy Father himself has not dogmatized. But it feels instinctively that it will naturally avoid a rigid, mechanical, engineering type of modernism; while on the other hand, it refuses to canonize the past and merely to pass down that which has now become lifeless yet once, in its own time, was considered to be a daring innovation. In other words, it leaves one free to choose and act within normal limits.

In many ways this is a question of semantics. For that reason Cardinal Tisserant's remark is a guiding light for the society. As Prefect of the Vatican library he advised the Liturgical Arts Society to work *en profondeur*: to try to penetrate ever more intimately and deeply the spirit of the liturgy, which is the spirit of the Church and in turn the spirit of Jesus Christ Himself.

It would be an interesting study to see how far the difficulties of Catholic Church art in the United States are due to the surrounding

influence of a Protestant culture, for the United States is the only great nation in the world which has been Protestant from the beginning of its national existence. Where Catholic religious art is tainted with too much sentimentality, a too sugary complexion, it is perhaps a reaction against Protestant evangelistic austerity and Puritanism.

On the other hand, the Protestant emphasis on communal worship of a demonstrative but not sacrificial character has made Catholics perhaps unduly suspicious of any movement to restore a greater participation of the laity in the service of the Church. At the same time, standards set by Protestant individualism and a certain type of evangelical Protestant sentimentalism are reflected in the reasoning sometimes adopted by Catholics for the defense of so-called popular taste.

In such a complicated matter distortions and generalizations are very easy. Nevertheless, our religious psychologists and sociologists can do a little exploring along this line. It is important to distinguish between a genuine conservatism based on a profound love of ancient traditions and veneration for the precious acquisitions of the past and a pseudo-conservatism that arises from a feeling of insecurity that can betray an unwillingness to take the time and trouble to look more deeply into the roots of our Christian culture itself.

These are, however, but temporary difficulties and it is useless to exaggerate them. They are far out-

weighed by the outlook which the Society has indeed opened up, particularly in the last few years as a result of a widening interest in liturgical questions throughout the world, along with the cordial reception given to our own work in most distant and unlikely places.

### World Perspective

Liturgical art, far from catering to a mere elite or cloistered minority, has developed into a meeting ground for Catholics all over the world. Indeed from its very nature, the universal worship of the Church, the sense of the Mystical Body of Christ, invites this meeting of souls and minds, all of which is aided by travel on our part to other countries, as Americans abroad become interested in the Catholic monuments of other nations.

(Just as a small instance in this connection, the St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League—headquarters 40 W. 13th St., New York, N. Y.—provides gratis a practical little folder for Catholics traveling in the Scandinavian countries introducing them to the ancient liturgical monuments of those lands as well as the facilities for Mass, confession, sermons, etc. at the present day.)

After all, this world-wide intercourse is a means by which we Americans can make our own special contribution to the Universal Church. It is also one more way by which we can demonstrate the genuine, the profoundly spiritual aspect of the United States to the skeptical or even hostile people of other countries.

### Intellect and Taste

These are our aims. This is what we are hoping to accomplish. Is the Liturgical Arts Society the proper instrument? All I can say is we could do incalculably more if we had somewhat greater means at hand. Were the society purely a cultural affair it would probably have a little difficulty securing aid as it is. It has to suffer the lot of those who work simply for God's glory.

Much is argued as to whether intellect or sentiment should be our chief guide in matters of religious artistic taste. This is a curious debate in view of the great predominance given to the intellect in our Catholic scholastic philosophy. The argument is peculiarly inept in view of the precision with which St. Thomas Aquinas explains to us the relative functions of the intellect and the senses, showing us, for instance, that though the *formal* object of the intellect is that of abstract essences, the *proper* object of the intellect is that of the quiddity or nature of things embodied in sensible material existences. The glory of the Catholic point of view so aptly expressed by the Thomistic philosophy is precisely this just and delicate balance between the sensible and the purely intellectual elements of man's nature. Sentiment may not flout the intellect, and the intellect cannot scorn sentiment.

From time to time voices are raised to the effect that there is no use trying to rationalize the norms of our liturgical-art products, that

the ultimate arbiter is popular taste, and if the taste displeases us then so much the worse for our own concern. Certainly we can agree that there is no reason for needlessly shocking popular taste. But if it means we cannot hope to inculcate an understanding for the really great traditions of art, of sculpture, or architecture through appeal to people's intelligence, then a vehement protest is in order. We must protest, too, if this indicates that the basic norms of form, of composition, etc., are much too indefinite to be expounded in an orderly fashion for the artistic "layman," who in point of fact is very often the cleric or the seminarian. It is one of the curious anomalies of the present time that we as Catholics who are so insistent upon what is objective in grounds of rational conduct and of ethical responsibility should be so willing to yield to complete subjectivism in a field where the practice of our own Faith is so intimately concerned.

### Primacy of Praise

In concluding this brief bit of philosophizing about the Society's aims and methods I regret that space keeps me from recalling the names and deeds of so many who have helped in this foundation or have continued its work from Charles D. Maginnis of blessed memory on. We can only say God has repaid them for their devotion and zeal. But I cannot omit mention of what may be an inner sanctuary for the spiritual life of the Society, the tenacious devotion over the great



part of these twenty-five years of a little group known as the Liturgical Arts Schola: a group of men drawn from its membership who have specialized over the years in Gregorian chant. For the first part of their corporate existence they were directed through the wonderfully wise and competent guidance of Dr. Becket Gibbs, international authority on choral practice and the Church's ritual chant. In recent years they have been blessed by the great competence of Father Joseph A. Foley of the Paulist Fathers, director of the Paulist choir.

The principle of the schola or the Quilisma Club, as they refer to themselves familiarly, is to keep alive in their own hearts and in our society precisely the simple and sublime spirit of the praise of God. It is a tenable theological proposition that the highest of all the ends of man is simply to praise the Creator. Ignatius Loyola places that first in his "Foundation" of the spiritual life. After all, that is the primary function of the liturgy, for from praise come thanksgiving and atonement and sacrifice and love. This is the spirit of the Magnificat, and this is the spirit of the Heart of Christ, offering eternal praise to His Father. This is the spirit of the Church united with that Sacred Heart as it offers its eternal homage.

The weakness of our religious life, it has often been said, is that it is too split up, too compartmented. The aim of the liturgical movement is not to make our life more complicated but precisely the opposite:

to clarify our spiritual life, to bring it more and more into a spirit of unity and utter simplicity, not a simplicity of negation but the simplicity of the total and complete affirmation of our faith. Out of that affirmation the creative spirit derives its sustenance. The great hope of the liturgical-arts movement and of the society which is its instrument is that the aims it pursues, the simple methods which it uses will lead to and encourage that creativeness which is the sign of the presence of the pervading spirit of God in the world.

Some years ago I proposed as a special devotion "for the society"—if the idea of such a devotion was not a contradiction—that we should make a point of placing all our hopes and fears and desires symbolically upon the paten along with the host to be consecrated at the Mass, and Harry Binsse designed a charming tiny booklet to that effect. All our interests and efforts flow into the Mass and from the Divine Sacrifice they flow out to the world.

The society has grown from a mustard-like seed. Its branches are still by no means large enough for all the birds of the air to take refuge therein. But be that as it may, its roots are sound. It has dug deep and struck living waters. It will continue to increase if those whose names are already enrolled in it remain faithful to the great principles upon which it was established. In a time of so great and such bitter divisions may it make its contribution toward uniting the world in Christ.

*When a thousand years have gone into the making of a Christian people, they cannot be scaled down to materialism either by Marxist teachers or Soviet tanks.*

### “They Are Dead . . .”\*

*The* TABLET

THE MAIN importance of what is happening in Hungary and Poland is that the rejection of the Marxist philosophy is national, that is to say, by artisans and peasants no less than by the younger generation indoctrinated in the schools. It cannot be explained away by any of the propaganda phrases that have been utilized, or called a revolt of minority groups or classes. It is the rejection by a whole people of what is offered to them as scientific and demonstrable truth.

The scenes in Budapest have been uncomfortably similar, as many Russian soldiers have obviously noted, to those with which Bolshevik history books are filled—stories of the proletariat on the barricades heroically resisting, in the name of freedom, national and personal, the harsh militarism of the autocratic State. The Communist Party appears in the guise of a foreign Czar, and the spectacle causes revulsion and starts doubts that will not be stilled. Even in Russia itself, the students have begun questioning the orthodoxy in which they have been reared, because the experience of everyday life is so plainly at variance with the theories they have been taught. The masters of Russia are placed

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\*An editorial reprinted from the *Tablet*, 128 Sloane St., London, S.W. 1, England, December 22, 1956.

in a fearful dilemma, because they have been professing a self-confidence never warranted by the facts.

In any specialized human activity, like those that make up the Olympic Games, the Russian system can produce dedicated experts as proficient at their specialty as anyone in the world. It would be well for the peace of mind of Russia's rulers if the contacts could be confined to such special contests. But what the students of Russia want is contact with the greater world, beyond the frontiers of the Soviet Union. It is what the rest of the world wants, and one group in the Kremlin certainly was, and may still be, in favor of it. But this intercourse must prompt the questionings about the scientific dogmatism of the Marxian creed, and its validity as an explanation of human history, as an account, for example, of the prodigious growth in material well-being and social equality of the North American Continent.

### **The Victorian Rationalist**

The nineteenth-century rationalists, when they thought about religion, were contemplating very different forms of society from the present. It was quite plausible, for those who saw religion established by autocratic States, and believed chiefly by the poor peasantries, to adopt an economic or political explanation as nineteenth-century Socialists, not only the Marxists, were all ready to do in the wake of their eighteenth-century teachers. They saw only those who taught it for its social utility and those who believed it as a comfort in their hard lives, the opium of the people, a pain-deadener for painful lives from which Socialism would lift the pain. This theory made no place for the ardent and convinced Christianity which has continued to grow since Marx's death, some part of which will be manifested in the great Congress of the Catholic Laity which will take place in Rome next year.

Nearly a hundred years ago John Morley, addressing himself to the Christians of his day, said: "We shall not attack you, we shall explain you." But it is the Victorian rationalist who can be fitted into his niche, and related to his origins, and accounted for, and the revealed religion which continues to defy the attempted classifications by successive ephemeral adversaries.

By the middle of the twentieth-century it was becoming plain even to the Marxians that their explanation of religion does not get to the heart of the matter. All that can be claimed for it is that it is useful as a partial social description of the secondary role of belief and worship, but that



religion would not fulfil this secondary role, making men patient or consoling them with hope, if it was an epiphenomenon.

It was part of the arrogance of Marx, as of his master in this matter Feuerbach, that he believed he had explained and accounted for religion in natural and social terms, as that which filled the vacuum created in imperfect societies: that as mankind progressed towards the perfect society, the place left for the vaporings and imaginings of the religious consciousness would be more and more circumscribed, until in the end there would be no place for it at all. Weak as they were at the beginning in the material resources to which they attached ultimate importance, the first Marxists were buoyed up by the firm conviction that the nineteenth-century, among its other great scientific achievements, had produced a true and satisfying scientific account of man and society. In all the decades in which Marxists were derided or persecuted, they were fortified by a superiority complex: they believed the future was on their side, and that history would reveal the accuracy of their diagnosis as the working classes came to power. It is this complacent foundational belief that has now lost its hold, because history has so strikingly failed to corroborate it.

### Discrediting Marx

The effects are likely to be far-reaching, for the discrediting of the Marxian diagnosis in this one particular is but part of a larger doubt which is more and more making itself heard: whether Marxism really has something so superior to offer mankind that it justifies the division of the world, and the burdensome load of armaments and fear, which results from the division. What is there to show anywhere in material achievements to justify the devious "advance by partial slogans," by which peoples are to be entangled unawares in the Marxian net? The Western world should lose no opportunity of engaging the Russians and the Communists of their satellite lands on this plane. There is something in fact ludicrous about the contrast between the immensity of the physical resources, the supersonic planes, nuclear weapons, armies of millions of men, and the crude and shallow nineteenth-century creed which all these resources have been organized to uphold or impose.

The essence of the Marxian view is that man was born yesterday; that only a lifetime ago the liberating truth was communicated to him through the mind of genius twice repeated; that Marx and Lenin came

and gave order and significance to the whole of the human past and direction for the human future. Their explanation made very little of human nature, could find no particular worth in individuals, and so became the appropriate creed for the makers and administrators of State machines.

Marxism is preeminently a creed for bureaucratic politicians, for it justifies them in whatever they wish to do to individuals or to peoples. But for that very reason it has been found repellent by human beings when they live close to it, and under it.

This is especially so where those peoples have long been nourished by doctrines proclaiming a much fuller and richer account of human nature, announcing man as indestructible by death, seeing the individual with a great destiny to be worked out in and through human society, but having a value apart, duties to his Creator as well as to other men, and therefore inalienable rights.

All this has been coming to the surface again where it had been suppressed for ten years or more, because the long centuries of the Christian past are not so easily erased. When a thousand years have gone to the making of a Christian people, they cannot be scaled down to materialism and to a small and servile view of themselves either by Marxist teachers or by Soviet tanks, and the Christian today at this Christmas of A.D. 1956 can surely say of this false philosophy that "they are dead who sought the life of the Child."



## The Lay Apostolate

It is important that we should realize that the lay apostolate is not necessarily confined to attendance at Catholic meetings and participation in what are loosely called Catholic activities. The field of the lay apostolate lies all about us: in our homes, in the schools, in the Services and universities, and in our own professional spheres. We are Catholics at every moment of every day and, no matter what we are doing, we have to give constant example of our Catholic teachings and way of life. If we do this then others will follow us.

It is a grave responsibility and if it is to be shouldered adequately we must not shrink from our task.—*John LaFarge, S.J. in the AVE MARIA, January 26, 1957.*

*Something is not proceeding aright in the scheme of modern life. An essential error is sapping its foundations. But where is that error? How and by whom can it be corrected?*

# Christmas Message<sup>\*</sup>

POPE PIUS XII

**T**HE inexhaustible mystery of the Nativity of Our Lord is about to be proclaimed once again to men on earth, who today, perhaps more than ever, are athirst for truth and security.

The mysterious brightness which shone forth on the holy night from the humble manger of the Son of Man, and the chorus of angels announcing peace, brought to new life in souls by the splendor and melody of the sacred rites, are renewing for men of today, who have been deluded by so many false hopes, the divine invitation to seek clearness of vision in the mystery of God, and in His love, true life. May all men be able to accept the heavenly invitation and, with the trusting sincerity of the shepherds to whom the mystery of Christmas was first revealed, say in their turn: "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us" (Luke 2:15).

The present generation, like those which have preceded it, and have certainly experienced the torture of unknown truth and the anguish of terrifying events, would turn from the crib of the Redeemer glorify-

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<sup>\*</sup>An address to the world from the Vatican, December 23, 1958.



ing and praising God, because in Christ they too have their only Saviour.

Let this, therefore, dear sons and daughters, be the Christian greeting which Our fatherly heart, saddened but not cast down, intends to express to you this year, in which threatening storms have returned to cast their shadows over the horizons of peace. To men who, terrified anew, are peering into the darkness in search of a faint glimmer of light in tranquillity, such as may soothe their tortured spirit in the deep contradiction of the present age, We point to the divine manger at Bethlehem whence re-echoes again that message of certain hope: "*Erunt prava in directa, et aspera in vias planas*"—"The crooked ways shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth" (Luke 3:5).

### The Contradiction of Modern Man

It is beyond doubt that the weight of a flagrant contradiction presses down the human race in the twentieth century. On the one hand, modern man, fashioner and eyewitness of the "second technical revolution," as if striking out in his pride, is confident that he can create a world of plenty, in wealth and goods, a world freed from poverty and uncertainty. On the other hand, there is the bitter reality of the long years of grief and ruin, with the resulting fear—become greater in these last months—of not succeeding in founding even a mere modest beginning of harmony and lasting peace.

Something, then, is not proceeding aright in the internal scheme of modern life; an essential error must be sapping its foundation. But where is that error concealed? How and by whom can it be corrected? In a word, will modern man succeed in overcoming, especially within himself, that depressing contradiction of which he is the author and victim?

Christians are convinced that they can overcome it by holding firm to the foundation of nature and faith, by means of a courageous, and prudent reassessment of the values in question, and primarily of the inner values. Their realism, which takes account of the entire universe and does not disregard the experience of the past, persuades them that they are not in much less favorable conditions than were their ancestors who, likewise by means of their faith, succeeded in overcoming within themselves the contradictions of their own time. They are convinced that the very contradiction of today demonstrates conclusively the deep cleavage between life and Christian belief, and that it is necessary, before all else, to cure this evil.

Very different, on the other hand, is the opinion of many others, who, exasperated by the contradiction, but reluctant to surrender the dream of the omnipotence of man, wish to submit to revision those values also over which they have no power and which elude the control of man's free choice, such as religion and natural rights.

In substance, they hold and teach the opinion that the fundamental contradiction of our time can be resolved by man himself, without God and without religion. It will not be resolved, they say, until modern man, at once creator and creature of the technical age, advances right to the end of his new road. And, they add, he must persist in the work already begun of extending completely his power over being regardless of religion and the concept of man and the world which is derived from religion. To seek some kind of compromise between religion and the technical mentality, they declare to be the basic error and the root of the present-day contradiction. In other words, they reject the invitation of Heaven to come to Bethlehem, where—and where alone—man can learn “what has come to pass, and what the Lord has made known to us,” that is, reality complete and objective as it concerns us.

But the man of the “second technical revolution” cannot thrust aside the call of God without aggravating the contradiction and its consequences. The invitation to truth and the promise of “peace on earth” retain their force for him also. Bowed down in adoration before the manger of the Man-God, he will see the whole truth, and consequently, the harmony of His universe. In the Son of God made man he will assuredly recognize the dignity of human nature, but also its limits; he will recognize that the deep meaning of human life and of the world does not rest on calculated formulae and laws, but on the free act of the Creator; he will be convinced that then only will he possess, in a true sense, “light” and “life,” when he binds himself to something absolute, to the truth which shone forth for the first time in its fullness at Bethlehem.

Concerning this threefold recognition we intend now to speak with you.

## I

The first step towards the interior victory over today's contradiction begins from the awareness and acceptance of human reality in its fullness. On the road towards the full grasp of this truth, on which ancient opinion expressed itself with difficulty, the believer moves more easily,

since faith makes smooth his path by removing prejudices and impediments such as the lack of faith of the skeptic or the shortsightedness of the rationalist, which prevent all progress towards the light. With a mind free and open to all possible greatness, the Christian has only to bow before the crib of Bethlehem to learn the truth about human nature, summed up, as in a visible synthesis, in the new-born Son of God.

The origin, the nature, the destiny and the history of man are bound up in that Infant, by the very fact of this birth among us. His infant cries are like the account of our history, without the knowledge of which the nature of man would remain an impenetrable enigma.

In fact, before the cradle of the Redeemer, the believer knows the original goodness and power of man, a gift through grace which was not due to him, in the happiness of Paradise. But he meditates also on his weakness. This weakness first manifested itself in the sin of our first parents and became then the sorrowful heritage which accompanied man—ever increased by other sins—in every path on earth, which had become almost hostile to him.

### Dominion Over Nature

Pausing for a moment to examine his power, the Christian knows that man's dominion over nature and its forces—this also a gift of divine grace—was to have been exercised only for the benefit, and not the danger, of human society, whose history—again a gift of God's grace—would have begun without the oppression of narrow misery, but in the free development of its powers under conditions favorable to their fullest and noblest progress.

At the same time, the adorer of the newly born Son of God knows also that original sin and its consequences deprive man not of his dominion over the earth, but rather of security in the exercise of that dominion. He knows also that with the weakness which followed the first sin, man's capacity and destiny to shape history were not destroyed, but that man would advance along life's path with sorrow, that his life would be a mixture of confidence and anguish, of wealth and misery, of success and failure, of life and death, of security and uncertainty until the ultimate decision is given at the gate of eternity.

Near the cradle of the newborn Son of God, the believer not only finds his past and the present condition of his nature, but he sees his new destiny, the work of infinite love, and how he can regain his lost glory. He knows, in fact, that in the cradle lies the Saviour—truly human and



truly divine—his Redeemer who came among men in order to heal the mortal wounds inflicted on their souls by sin, to restore to him the dignity of his divine Sonship and to confer on him the forces of grace that he might conquer, if not always exteriorly, at least interiorly, the general disorder caused by original sin and made worse by personal sin.

Moreover, this internal victory, for which divine grace is indispensable, the Christian perfects through a knowledge of the true nature of man redeemed by Christ, of his dignity and of his limitations.

See him at work and see how he knows how to avail himself of this knowledge of the "truth which makes men free" (Luke 8:32), which is the support of life even when difficult and fatal circumstances defy its external conquest.

A Christian put in similar circumstances, which very often cause others to rebel against life itself, does not demand or desire from God anything that is not in keeping with the absolute goodness and wisdom of the divine Will. And while he finds it reasonable and just that God should not be obliged to create the best possible world, he finds comfort in the thought that the same God, who is a loving Father, will not allow Himself to be guided in giving out graces and helps to men except by the infinite holiness and justice of this all benevolent Will, whose one aim is that all men might be able in freedom to attain their eternal destiny.

How then ought the believer to comfort himself before the painful contradiction which weighs heavily on the modern world and of which we were just speaking? Although he should be in the happy possession of all the means suitable for dominating his own interior life, he is not permitted, nor ought he to be permitted, to exempt himself from contributing to its solution externally. However, the first obligation of a Christian would be to persuade the man of today not to look on human nature with a systematic pessimism or with a gratuitous optimism, but rather to recognize the real dimensions of his power. Moreover he will try to make his contemporaries—men of this second technical revolution—understand that it is not necessary for them to free themselves from the yoke of religion in order to solve this contradiction under that light which knows how to separate the truth from the false, and to offer to as many as suffer its oppression the only solution possible without shock or ruin.

To fulfill this obligation with enlightened charity, it is fitting that the Christian know in a very concrete manner the so-called modern man's

way of thinking, which is far from realistic in its attitude toward sin.

While they do not tolerate the concept of sin—either original or personal—in the systems of their world, yet, on the other hand, they cannot close their eyes to the experience that morally man is prone to fall. They ascribe perverse inclinations only to morbid sickness, to functional weaknesses which of themselves can be cured. And they assure us that, although the laws are not yet fully known to which man is subject in his relations with the world surrounding him and which affect the very depths of his soul, still they will arrive at a complete cure of these present deficiencies. It will be necessary, they add, to await the day in which, from the full knowledge of man's interior mechanism, there will arise the therapeutic art of curing his moral morbid dispositions. As the modern power over exterior nature, the fruit of a profound knowledge of the laws which govern it, renders possible all technical construction, so too there is no reason to doubt that so much more success will be realized in regulating the moral makeup of man. Why, they ask themselves, should man alone remain the only structure which cannot be comprehended and controlled?

From such a manner of falsifying reality they are already reaping regrettable consequences. The softness generally lamented in education, the excessive indulgence in the face of crime, the silence in regard to responsibility and the aversion to the very idea of punishment, however just, are the direct consequences of a concept of man according to which everyone is in himself good and all defects—so it is affirmed—derive from a failure to gear man to the function to which he, together with his world, is subject.

The same theory is applied to questions of social life. According to them, it is necessary, in the troublesome problems of modern democracy, not to accuse man's conscience and his moral sense, but rather his momentary inability to progress. The defects in man are the result of ignorance and the refusal to take into serious consideration the goodness of man, that goodness which, in the last analysis, is found in all. Hence, they add, through an ever increasing knowledge of the natural laws which govern man and his world, the good qualities of everyone will be truly appreciated and authority and responsibility will be distributed among many, even all, men.

Yet how is one to conduct himself in face of the present deficiencies of social and civil life, such as the anonymity of power, the swallowing up of the individual in the mass and the uncertain balance of forces at

work in society? The adherents of this so-called realism assure us that, in order to avoid such consequences, it is sufficient to insert, almost mechanically and in mere automatic fashion, the principle of personal responsibility and that of the balance of energies in the complex of community life. And, they repeat, just as the most widespread knowledge of the laws and functions of nature outside man has attained the boldest technical conquests, so too, in social structures, an increased knowledge of the laws which regulate their mechanism will suffice to arrive at the perfect society.

But can those hopes be justified, since they are based on a conception which, while claiming to be realistic, shows an ignorance of the true nature of man? Is it really true that his so-called predispositions to evil are simply the curable defects of a normal process, like the breakdowns of a machine or apparatus, which are corrected by advancing technical knowledge?

Even admitting, for it is true, that man feels the impulses of many natural acts and of functional complexes, yet he remains—quite differently from matter, plants and animals—above them, and, while acknowledging their meaning and import, he will always be their master, as he freely inserts them in some way or other into the course of events. Man dominates those actions and complexes because he is above all a spiritual being, a person, a subject of free action or omission, and not merely the meeting ground where these natural processes unfold.

In this does his dignity consist—and his limitation too. For he is capable of doing both good and evil. He is capable of actuating all the possibilities and positive dispositions of his being. But he is also capable of endangering them.

Now because of the great values at stake, it is precisely this risk that has assumed massive proportions in the twentieth century. It is this that creates and explains the painful contradiction noticed by our contemporaries. To overcome it there is no other remedy than a return to true realism, to Christian realism, which embraces with the same sureness man's dignity and his limits, his capacity to conquer himself and the reality of sin as well.

### **False Realism**

Not so that false realism, some of whose unfortunate applications we wish to point out. It is clear that it is this which strikes at the roots of



private and public morality, emptying of all meaning the ideals of conscience and responsibility and weakening that of free will.

Equally harmful are the consequences in the field of education, as can already be seen wherever it is under the more or less hidden influence of false realism. There are schools where the effort to teach is not proposed at all, or only in a subordinate way. Parents are rendered practically unable to educate their children properly by example and guidance. All that is much more the cause of the failure in education openly deplored today than the defects or mistakes, serious though they be, of the pupil. Educators and children, no less than the mature individual, should, in preparing for life, once more acknowledge the reality of sin and grace, refusing to listen to mouthings about pure and simple predispositions which will be cared for by medicine and psychology.

False realism finds wider application in the present-day structure of democracy, whose insufficiency, as we have pointed out, would depend on mere defects of institutions, to be attributed to the still incomplete knowledge of natural processes and the complexity of the social mechanism's functions.

But even the state and its form depend on the moral character of its citizens, especially today, when the modern state, in its keen awareness of technical and organizational possibilities, is, unfortunately, inclined through public agencies to deprive the individual of thought and responsibility for his own life. A modern democracy thus erected will necessarily fall whenever it does not, or cannot, any longer base itself on the individual moral responsibilities of its citizens. But even if it wished to, it could not do so successfully, for it would not meet a response wherever the sense of the true reality of man—the awareness of human nature's dignity and its limitations—are no longer flourishing in the people.

There are efforts at correction through large-scale institutional reforms, often too broad in scope or based on false principles. But the reform of institutions is not as urgent as the reform of conduct. This latter reform, in turn, can be accomplished only on the foundations of man's true reality, such as is learned, with religious humility, at the crib of Bethlehem. Even in the life of states the moral strength and weakness of men, sin and grace, have a definite part. Twentieth century politics cannot ignore this, nor allow continuance of the error of wishing to separate the state from religion in the name of a secularism that cannot actually be justified.

## II

The second error of so-called realistic thought which is at the bottom of the present-day contradiction consists in the claim to create a society entirely new, without taking into account the historic reality of man, neither the reality of his free act which determines it nor of the religion which this liberty fosters and approves. It is impossible to foresee all the consequences of this error, but the most immediate consequence will be the destruction of that security which the world ardently desires, but which is, at present, so precarious.

The rejection of the three values—historical reality, free act and religion—as dead weight which slows down or impedes in its course the ship of modern progress, is a consequence of the attitude of the realistic thought alluded to, which admits of no limits to man's power, treats everything in a technical manner and fosters complete confidence in technological ability.

### The Technical Age

It is the prerogative of the men of the present technical age, they declare, to be able to construct society ever anew, in step with that progress in technological ability and without the need to learn from the past. The past, on the contrary, being linked with all manner of prejudices, but particularly with those inspired by religion, would weaken confidence and temper its constructive impulse.

Modern man, conscious of and proud to live in this world as in a house which he, and he alone, is building, allots to himself the function of creating. What once was does not interest him nor detain him. The whole world becomes for him a laboratory where he is ever gathering together again, with strict mathematical connections, the forces of nature, distributing them again according to fixed proportions and shaping and ordering events in advance. There is no doubt that there are still reactions, there are still facts, in which nature seems to resist the will and plans of man and points to a whole which can be broken down in its ultimate elements only at the cost of serious consequences, if not of utter catastrophe.

Hence there is no reason to wonder that modern man, in approaching social life, does so with the gesture of a technician who, after having dismantled a machine into its constituent parts, sets himself to recon-

struct it according to a pattern of his own design. But, when it is a question of social realities, his desire to create things wholly new is met by an insurmountable obstacle, namely, human society itself in its inviolable historical patterns. Social life, in fact, is something which has come slowly into being with much labor, and, as it were, through the successive strata of the positive contributions furnished by the preceding generations. Only by supporting the new foundations on those established strata is it possible to construct something still new. The rule of history over the social realities of the present and of the future is, then, beyond question, and it cannot be neglected by anyone desiring to improve or adapt them to the new era.

But the supposed realists, with the intention of overcoming at all costs the resistance of historical reality, direct their zeal for destruction against religion, which is, according to them, guilty of having created and of wishing to retain in life all that is of the past, and especially its most decadent forms.

Religion is guilty, above all, of consolidating the social ideas of men within schemes which are absolute, and so immutable. It therefore establishes an obstacle in the path of the future and, for this reason, must be removed.

Beyond doubt, the Christian does recognize and respect the rule of history over the present and the future of human society, because the believer cannot ignore and reject all that is true reality. He knows that, at the foundation of human reality and society, there is not an event happening according to mechanical necessity, but the free and ever beneficent action of God. There at the manger at Bethlehem the deep sense of man's history, past and future, is transformed into human shape, and embraces its present, however sad, which the Christian approaches in the consoling conviction of security.

Security! That is the keenest desire of those alive today. They ask for it from society and its plans. But the self-styled realists of this age have proved themselves incapable of giving it, because they wish to put themselves in the place of the Creator and make themselves arbiters of the plan of creation.

### **Freedom and Security**

On the contrary, religion and the reality of the past teach that social structures, such as matrimony and family, the community and professional groups and social union in personal property, are essential cells



which secure man's freedom and, along with it, his functioning history. Hence they cannot be tampered with and their essence cannot be the subject of arbitrary revision.

Assuredly, whoever is seeking freedom and security ought to restore society to its true and Supreme Lawgiver, persuading himself that only a concept of society which has its origin in God protects itself in its most important undertakings. Those who through atheism, in theory or even in practice, make gods of technology and the mechanical progress of events inevitably end by becoming enemies of true human liberty, since they deal with mankind as with inanimate objects in a laboratory.

These considerations are less extraordinary and less divorced from actual fact than they may appear to be. However, We extend Our approbation, which has been accepted in those places where thought is being given to the improvement of somewhat undeveloped territories of the so-called depressed areas. The care devoted to the bettering of existing social structures which are susceptible of improvement is certainly praiseworthy. But it would be an error to uproot man altogether from tradition under the impulse of technology and modern organization. Like plants plucked from their own surroundings and transferred to uncongenial conditions, these men would find themselves cruelly isolated and would fall victims thereafter, perhaps, to ideas and tendencies which fundamentally no one can wish for.

In this way respect for what history has evolved is the sign of the genuine will for reforms and the guarantee of their happy outcome. This is valid throughout history, that kingdom of human reality in which social man must occupy himself not only with the forces of nature but with his own self. He is responsible before his ancestors and his descendants, and to him has been given the duty of molding continuously the life of the community. In this there is always a dynamic development by means of personal and free action, but without a tampering with the security which exists in society and with society. In this, on the other hand, there is also ever present an assured fund of traditions and unchanging values to protect its security, yet without taking from sections of society the free and personal action of the individual.

In this fashion man weaves his own history, or rather cooperates with God in bringing into being a reality worthy of the subject and, at the same time, worthy of the design of the Creator. It is a duty, as exalted as it is difficult, which only he who understands history and freedom will

be able to carry through with success, by harmonizing the dynamism of reforms with the unchangeability of traditions and the free act with the security of the community. The Christian who prostrates himself before the manger at Bethlehem understands fully its necessity and seriousness, but from the same manger he draws light and strength to accomplish worthily his important duty.

### III

Freedom and personal responsibility, properly ordered social relations, progress correctly understood—these are, indeed, human values, for man effects them and profits by them; but they are likewise religious and divine values, if one considers their sources.

Now even in the West there is an effort to attack and banish from modern society the very basis of these values in the name of laicism, of man's vain self-sufficiency. Thus this strange condition has come about that not a few public figures, possessing no strong religious convictions, wish, and are obliged, to defend for the sake of the common good those fundamental values which draw their being only from religion and from God.

#### The Pretended Realists

Pretended realists do not like to admit such a statement and even blame religion all the more for turning into a religious quarrel what should be merely a political and economic difference of opinion. They paint in vivid hues the terror and cruelty of old wars of religion in order to persuade men that the present day quarrels between East and West are really inoffensive and that a little more common sense would suffice to produce tranquillity between divergent economic ambitions and solid relations between political powers. To refer to absolute values, they claim, unhappily falsifies the true state of affairs, whets passion and makes it more difficult to advance towards a practical and reasonable union.

For our part We, as head of the Church, have up to now avoided, just as we did in previous cases, calling Christendom to a crusade. We can, however, call for full understanding of the fact that, where religion is a vital living heritage, men do look upon the struggle unjustly forced upon them by their enemy as a crusade. But We declare, for the benefit of all, that despite the effort to give an innocuous appearance to some

destructive tendencies, there is a question of the absolute values of man and of society. Because of Our great responsibility We cannot let this point be lost in the fog of equivocation.

On this score We must with deepest sadness mourn the help given by some Catholics, both ecclesiastical and lay, to the tactics of obfuscation, calculated to bring about a result that they themselves did not intend. How can they fail to see that such is the aim of all that insincere activity which hides under the name of "talks" and "meetings"? Why enter a discussion, for that matter, without a common language? How is it possible to meet if the paths are divergent, that is, if one party rejects or denies the common absolute values, thereby making all "co-existence in truth" unattainable?

Out of respect for the name of Christian, compliance with such tactics should cease, for, as the Apostle warns, it is inconsistent to wish to sit at the table of God and at that of His enemies (I Cor. 10:21).

And if there still be any vacillating spirits, notwithstanding the black testimony of ten years of cruelty, the blood just shed and the immolation of many lives sacrificed by a martyred people should finally convince them. Still, it is remarked, the bridges must not be cut, mutual relations must rather be preserved. But for this, whatever responsible governmental and political leaders judge they must do, by way of contacts and mutual relations for humanity's peace and not for private interests, is enough. That is sufficient which competent ecclesiastical authority decides it should do to gain recognition of the Church's rights and freedom.

### The Cause of Peace

If unpleasant realities force Us to set forth the terms of the struggle in clear language, no one can properly accuse Us of favoring the stiffening of opposing blocks and still less of having in some fashion abandoned that mission of peace which flows from our Apostolic office. Rather, if We kept silence, We would have to fear the judgment of God. We remain closely allied to the cause of peace, and God alone knows how much We yearn to be able to announce it in full and happy tones with the angels of Christmas. But precisely in order to protect it from the present threats, We must point out where the danger lies, the tactics of its enemies and what marks them as such. Not otherwise did the newborn Son of God, Himself infinite goodness, unhesitatingly draw clear lines of demarcation and face death on behalf of the truth.



We are convinced that today too, in the face of an enemy determined to impose on all peoples, in one way or another, a special and intolerable way of life, only the unanimous and courageous behavior of all who live the truth and the good can preserve peace, and will preserve it. It would be a fatal error to repeat what, in similar circumstances, happened during the years preceding the Second World War, when all the threatened nations, and not merely the smallest, sought their safety at the expense of others, using them as shields, so to speak, and even seeking very questionable economic and political advantages from their neighbors' suffering. In the end all were together overwhelmed in the holocaust.

### Arms and War

Hence, a definite need of this period—a means of insuring the whole world's peace and a fruitful share of its goods, a force which embraces, too, the peoples of Asia, Africa and the Near East, including Palestine with its Holy Places—is the restoring of European solidarity. But this unity is not assured until all the associated nations realize that the political and economic defeats of one can nowhere in the long run result in true gains for the others. This unity is not strong, as far as the forming of public opinion is concerned, if in the hour of common peril criticism, even though justified, of one nation's actions is expressed by the other with such onesidedness as to cause doubt that any bond of union at all remains. A good course of action can never be had through mere sentiment. Much less can a true political course for today be maintained with the sentiments of yesterday and the day before. Under such influence it would be impossible to judge correctly certain important questions, such as military service, weapons and war.

Present-day conditions, which find no counterparts in the past, should be clear to everyone. There is no longer room for doubt concerning aims and methods which rely on tanks, when these latter noisily crash over borders and sow death in order to force civilian people into a pattern of life they explicitly detest, when, destroying as it were the stages of possible negotiation and mediation, the threat is made of using atomic weapons to gain certain demands, be they justified or not. It is clear that in the present circumstances there can be verified in a nation the situation wherein, every effort to avoid war being expended in vain, war—for effective self defense and with the hope of a favorable outcome against unjust attack—could not be considered unlawful.

If, therefore, a body representative of the people and a government—both having been chosen by free elections—in a moment of extreme danger decides, by legitimate instruments of internal and external policy, on defensive precautions, and carries out the plans which they consider necessary, it does not act immorally. Therefore a Catholic citizen cannot invoke his own conscience in order to refuse to serve and fulfill those duties the law imposes. On this matter we feel that We are in perfect harmony with Our predecessors, Leo XIII and Benedict XV, who never denied that obligation, but lamented the headlong armaments race and the moral dangers accompanying barracks life, and urged, as We do likewise, general disarmament as an effective remedy (see Acts of Leo XIII, volume 14, Rome, 1895, p. 210; Archives of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, Notes of Cardinal Gasparri, Secretary of State of Benedict XV, to Prime Minister of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, September 28, 1917).

### The Dictates of Conscience

There are, then, occasions and times in the life of nations in which only recourse to higher principles can establish clearly the boundaries between right and wrong, between what is lawful and what is immoral, and bring peace to consciences faced with grave decisions. It is therefore consoling that in some countries, amid today's debates, men are talking about conscience and its demands.

This shows that they have not forgotten that social life is saved from chaos only insofar as it permits itself to be supported by absolute norms and an absolute end. It shows that they implicitly condemn those who believe that they can resolve the questions of human coexistence on the basis of good external appearances and with a practical view, aiming to act according to where interest and power may be found in individual cases.

Although the program which is at the foundation of the United Nations aims at the realization of absolute values in the coexistence of peoples, the recent past has shown that false realism is succeeding in prevailing in not a few of its members, even when it is a question of restoring respect for these same values of human society, openly trampled upon. The unilateral view which tends to work in the various circumstances only according to personal interest and power is succeeding in bringing it about that accusations of destroying the peace are treated very differently, and thus the different degree of gravity which in these

cases, taken individually, should be judged in the light of absolute values, is forthwith completely perverted.

No one expects or demands the impossible, not even from the United Nations. But one should have a right to expect that their authority should have had its weight, at least through observers, in the places in which the essential values of man are in extreme danger.

Although the United Nations' condemnation of the grave violations of the rights of men and entire nations is worthy of recognition, one can nevertheless wish that, in similar cases, the exercise of their rights, as members of this organization, be denied to states which refuse even the admission of observers—thus showing that their concept of state sovereignty threatens the very foundations of the United Nations. This organization ought also to have the right and the power of forestalling all military intervention of one state in another, whatever the pretext under which it is effected, and also the right and power of assuming, by means of a sufficient police force, the safeguarding of order in the state which is threatened.

### General Disarmament

If We allude to these defects, it is because We desire to see strengthened the authority of the United Nations, especially for effecting general disarmament which We have so much at heart and on which We have already spoken in other discourses. In fact, only in the ambit of an institution like the United Nations can the promise of individual nations to reduce armament, especially to abandon the production and use of certain arms, be mutually exchanged under the strict obligation of international law. Likewise, only the United Nations is at present in a position to exact the observance of this obligation by assuming effective control of the armaments of all nations without exception. Its exercise of aerial observation will assure certain and effective knowledge of production and military preparedness for war with relative ease, while avoiding the disadvantages which the presence of foreign troops in a country can give rise to.

It indeed almost approaches the miraculous what technical science has been able to attain in this field. In fact, by the use of an adequate wide-angle lens and sufficient light, it is possible now to photograph, from a height of several kilometers and in sufficiently great detail, objects which are on the earth's surface. Scientific progress, modern techniques both mechanical and photographic, have succeeded in constructing



cameras which have reached extraordinary perfection in all aspects. Film of high sensitivity with very fine grain makes it possible to enlarge pictures to hundreds of times their original size. Such cameras, mounted on airplanes which go at a speed very close to that of sound, are able automatically to take thousands of pictures, so that hundreds of thousands of square kilometers can be explored in a relatively short time.

The experiments conducted in this field have given exceptionally important results, permitting one to produce concrete evidence of machines, individual persons and objects existing on the ground and even, at least indirectly, in subterranean places. Researches thus far made have shown how very difficult it would be to camouflage the movement of troops or artillery, vast stores of arms or industrial centers important for war production. If these surveys could be permanent and systematic, it would be possible to bring out the minutest details and thus give a solid guarantee against eventual surprises.

The acceptance of control: this is the point crucial for victory, where every nation will show its sincere desire for peace.

### **The Will for Peace**

The desire for peace: free man's most valuable possession, this life's inestimable treasure, peace, is the fruit of men's effort, but also a precious gift of God. The Christian knows it since he has understood it at the cradle of the newborn Son of God. On His truth and on His commandments, the supreme absolute values, all order is founded and by them guarded and rendered fruitful in works of progress and civilization.

In concluding We add one final word of encouragement. It is most consoling for Us to see the sympathetic and generous action towards the oppressed Hungarian nation on the part of all Our beloved sons, of charitable organizations, of entire nations and also of the fairminded newspapers. We are likewise convinced that good men will not cease to pray and to make sacrifices to lighten the sad conditions of this martyred people. There are already many on earth who, in the turbulent changes of the last ten years, have experienced personally what misery is. How would it be possible to remain indifferent before the dire want of others? And how can they who are living in comfort remain insensible to the poverty of their neighbor?

But together with your charity, may there be granted in abundance to those in misfortune, above all else, the light and the life of the mystery of Christ's birth. Both have been given in Christ. And this grace, this

peace and this trust in God which will restore all justice and reward all sacrifice will not be able to be taken away from them by any human power.

And now on all those listening, and especially on those suffering, on the humble and on the poor, on those who are enduring persecutions for 'justice' sake (Matthew 5:10), may Our Apostolic Benediction descend, as a pledge of divine grace.



## Community of Nations

In the Christian concept of the community of nations, of which the theologians have spoken, and on which the Popes, in particular Pius XII, have clearly expressed their views during the last half century, two points are absolutely clear and unmistakable. On the one hand the nations have the right to their independence and freedom; they even have absolute need of this independence and this freedom in order to procure sound possibilities for economic and cultural development for their members. On the other hand, nations have the duty of fitting in to the international community like members in a body. As this community becomes more organized, the nations must entrust to it the exercise of certain functions which up to that time had been theirs owing to the shortcomings of the international society. One such function, for example, is the punishment of the criminal. This transfer of powers does not effect their sovereignty.—A VATICAN RADIO *Broadcast*.

*The UN offers the only present promise we have for sustained peace in our time: peace with any approximation of justice.*

## The Hope of Mankind\*

THE AMERICAN HIERARCHY

ONCE again in our time the alarm bell is ringing in the night. The world, inured as it is to tragedy, is apprized of tragedy still more profound. In the events of this hour at which the Bishops of the American hierarchy meet in annual session, they and all men concerned with human welfare under God read the threat of catastrophe so dire as to destroy the last bulwarks of civilization.

One voice, urgent and clear, has made itself heard above the tumult of the nations. The Common Father of Christendom, Pope Pius XII, has spoken out with unhesitating forthrightness. To those peoples who have been made the victims of a brutality so gross as to defy historic comparison, he has addressed words of compassion which could only come from a father's heart. To those nations bent upon aggression and which have ignored the sacred rights of humanity and the instruments of justice upon which they rest, he has issued stern warning of their madness.

### Primacy of Law and Order

To all, whether inspired by selfish interest or led astray by rash counsel, who would jeopardize the delicate balance of world peace

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\*The annual statement of the American Hierarchy, November 18, 1956.



he has recalled the primacy of law and order in the settlement of human disagreements.

In this crisis we can only add our voice to his. We echo his burning reproof of those who have dared to unleash the hounds of war in a world which has already suffered so long and so bitterly. With him we denounce with all our strength this fresh outbreak of aggression which sets at utter defiance the hard-won concert of the nations for the outlawing of international banditry. With him we plead for a renewal of that basic sanity among men and nations which will establish peace upon its only enduring foundations of justice and charity. With him we urge upon the world not the counsels of despair which would describe the situation as beyond salvation, but the promise of a better hope implicit in the dawning recognition of human solidarity under the universal fatherhood of God.

We share his anguish for those whose unmerited sufferings have again filled the cup of human misery to overflowing. Our eyes follow his as he surveys the ravaged cities, the desolated countrysides, the charred ruins of a thousand homes and shrines. We count with him the ghastly casualties of modern warfare, the broken bodies, the dead in their silent windrows.

Foremost, inevitably, in our thinking are the heroic people of Hungary. For centuries they have been a bastion of Christendom against the outer perils, and for centuries their blood has been spilled for the ideal of a united Christian society. Now again they have received the full brunt of a calculated fury and have written a matchless chapter in the annals of freedom. To them, in their darkest hour, we offer the sympathy of our common faith and we pledge our unrelenting efforts to help them achieve that ultimate liberty for which their sons and daughters have died, surely not in vain.

It is not mere rhetoric to say that at this juncture the world is poised on the brink of disaster: it is grim realism. Yet war in modern terms would be a nightmare of unimaginable horrors. It can only annihilate; it has no power to solve our problems. If, in the ultimate resort, it is the duty of man to resist naked aggression, still it is obvious that every possible means consistent with divine law and human dignity must be employed and exhausted to avoid the final arbitrament of nuclear warfare. It has been the hope of humankind that a means adequate to the necessity might be found in the concert of the United Nations.

This is neither the time nor the place to review its history or to pass

judgment on its achievement. If there have been mistakes in its decisions and faltering in its procedures, that is no more than a commentary on our human condition. The fact remains that it offers the only present promise we have for sustained peace in our time; peace with any approximation of justice. The implication of our Holy Father's recent impassioned messages, clearly revealed in their context, is that the nations must employ their unity with such revived strength and purpose as to banish the spectre of war. It is division which tempts the aggressor; it is unity which gives him pause.

### Threat of Disunity

Nothing could be conceived more disheartening for the cause of peace, nothing more discreditable to the honor of nations which have pledged themselves to peace, than the disunity which threatens to disrupt our immediate counsels and dissipates our strength. With the Sovereign Pontiff we recognize the urgency of prompt and effective intervention to silence the guns of war and to enforce the pacific arbitration of conflicting claims. With him, also, we emphasize the paramount need for a heightened concept of the universal validity of law among nations as among men. For unless God and His justice are acknowledged as basic to the very substance of law, there is no foundation upon which men may hope to build a lasting citadel of peace. There, for those who will read it, is the poignant warning of our present tragedy.

It is with genuine satisfaction, amid all this distress, that we as Americans have followed the course set by our own Government for the avoidance of international calamity. Worthy of highest praise are its efforts, rising above considerations of party and politics, to bring the problems before the tribunal of the nations, to restore mutual confidence in all those who seek justice, and to counter the threat of anarchy by marshaling the full strength of those forces of law and order which the world commands. Our President, indeed, has set a pattern of vigorous leadership, and has emphasized many of the points which have been dwelt upon by Pope Pius XII. He too is alert to the overriding need of a developed reverence for international law, clearly mindful, as he stressed in his recent address to the American people, that without law there can be no peace.

"If you wish peace," said the pagan axiom, "prepare for war." Christianity has revised that saying: "If you wish peace, prepare for peace." Though the hour is late indeed, it is not yet too late. There is the Divinity

which governs the destinies of this world, and the supreme folly is to leave God out of our reckoning. As the Bishops of the United States we solemnly call upon the faithful throughout the land to pledge themselves to a veritable crusade of prayer. Let it be for the specific ends that international sanity will triumph over war; that justice may be vindicated by the nations united under law; and that our own beloved country, under God, may lead the way to that better hope for all mankind. Nor let us forget those who have suffered and who suffer now; that out of the crucible of their sacrifice may come the minted gold of freedom. We stand with the Vicar of Christ, and our prayer is for peace for our country and all the world—a peace with justice and charity.



## The Laity and Vocations

I do not think it rash to suggest that almost everyone who has any contact with young men knows some one who would make a good priest and who might be led to the priesthood if he were given the right direction in the right way. It is these potential vocations that are not quite mature enough to develop of their own strength that we must try to save. It is these vocations which Christ Our Lord had in mind when He said plaintively that the harvest is great but the workers are few. Let the faithful remember that the work of fostering vocations pertains to them no less than to those who are already the Church's ministers. It is because the laity needs priests that vocations must be multiplied. It is within the ranks of the laity that the most effective vocational programs can and must be organized.—*Most Rev. Richard J. Cushing, Archbishop of Boston, in the CANADIAN MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART, February, 1957.*



*Good Christians cannot be less conscious of their civic responsibilities than they are of their family and professional obligations.*

## Christian Citizenship\*

### THE CANADIAN HIERARCHY

**D**URING their annual meeting in 1953, the Canadian Hierarchy reminded Catholics of certain fundamental moral truths upon which sound family life is founded, truths the general practice of which adds greatly to the common good of society. And, morality being indivisible, it follows that those who take their family responsibilities seriously are more likely to be good citizens than those who neglect them.

Furthermore, it is vain to imagine that self-centeredness in its many forms can easily be overcome; nor is it sufficient to overcome it only in the home, where its destructive effects are especially harmful. For though it may be banished from the home, self-centeredness may well continue to flourish in our social and community life, in direct opposition to the ideals of citizenship.

### Importance of Citizenship

This year we wish to outline the principal obligations involved in the practice of the virtue of citizenship. The importance of this virtue cannot be denied, especially in a democracy, of which system of government it has been said that none demands higher standards of its citizens. It is true in the case of individual virtues, since there can be no sound,

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\*A statement issued at the conclusion of the annual general meeting of the Canadian Catholic Conference, Ottawa, Ont., Canada, November 19, 1956.

healthy society unless the men and women who compose it are honest, temperate and generous in their private lives. It is no less true of citizenship as a whole, for without this social virtue a citizen would be mediocre even if his private life were beyond reproach.

Unfortunately, it happens that many honest people, who believe themselves to be good Christians, appear to be far less conscious of their civic responsibilities than they are of their family and professional obligations. Knowingly or otherwise they think and act as if the force of the moral law did not extend to their whole life, public as well as private. Even without realizing it, they display a lack of citizenship the results of which are only too visible and may, in the long run, seriously endanger not only individual moral values but the well-being of society itself.

What, then, is this virtue, so often misunderstood by those who have the greatest opportunities to put it into practice? It may be quite simply defined. It is the firm resolve to subordinate one's personal interests—or any other special interests—to the common good of society. Thus understood, citizenship is directly derived from justice in its highest form, i.e., general or social justice, since its function is to direct the practice of all the other virtues towards the common good, or to render to that "other person" (society) that which is rightfully due.

### **Your Dependence on Society**

In fact, we owe a true debt to society. If we remember our origins and recognize our limitations, we shall be obliged to admit our dependence upon society. Our very life, and those material advantages which make life worth living, come to us by means of the family which is itself an integral part of society. And having received so much from society, it is only just that we should give back to society what she requires from us if she is to fulfill her obligation to all her members. Citizenship impels the individual to discharge this debt honorably, whether by keeping the civil law, paying taxes or serving the community by accepting public office.

Being concerned with the good of one's neighbor, citizenship is engendered by that charity of which St. Paul wrote, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians (13:5) that it "is not self-seeking," which means, according to St. Augustine, "that it prefers the common good to its own good." "That is why," he adds, "you will measure your progress by the greater care you will give to the common good in preference to your

personal advantage." It will readily be understood, then, that Christians, for whom the great commandment is that of charity, must be outstanding among men by the quality of their citizenship, whether they exercise it as governors or as those governed.

The Christians of the first centuries belonged almost entirely to the class of those who were ruled, as distinct from the ruling class of their day. Mindful of Christ's teaching to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's," the Apostles preached submission to established authority. They stressed the fact that all authority comes from God and merits obedience, provided that it commands nothing contrary to Divine Law.

In time, however, Christians were called upon to take part in the government of their respective countries and to exercise temporal power. The Church then explained to her children the true nature of this power, which was to be used in conformity with God's plan. We are told by St. Paul that civil authority is a means used by God to lead men to good. Just laws enacted by authority are made binding by Divine Law itself: "Thou must needs, then, be submissive, not only for fear of punishment, but in conscience" (Rom. 13: 4-5).

In order legitimately to exercise power over his fellows, a man must act with a view to attaining a good higher than himself, of which he is but the trustee. It was explicitly stated by Pope Leo XIII in the Encyclical *Immortale Dei* that "civil authority must never be used, on any pretext whatsoever, to the advantage of one person or a small group, because it was instituted for the common good."

### The Role of Government

The duty of responsible leaders of Government is not only to ensure the individual good of every citizen, but also to establish those external and social conditions which will permit all to achieve, by their own efforts, the degree of human perfection to which they may legitimately aspire. Thus, in the matter of material prosperity, for instance, the state should not be expected continually to increase the allowances or grants paid directly to individuals, but rather should seek vigilantly to develop and sustain general economic conditions which permit every citizen to provide adequately for his needs and for those of his family.

Governments must not use their political strength to usurp the functions of private enterprise; nor should they attempt to do the work of those organizations which act as intermediaries between the citizens and



the state. The role of government is rather to support their efforts, to co-ordinate them, to arbitrate when necessary between groups whose interests conflict, and to dispense justice impartially to all.

Yet, in some cases, preference may legitimately be given to citizens in poorer circumstances, as a means of modifying social injustice which cannot entirely be eradicated.

In any system of government involving different political parties, citizens must beware of that deformation of citizenship which is blind partisanship. Party leaders may justifiably try to convince voters of the benefits they believe will flow from the election of their party to power, but in so doing they must still set an example by their respect for truth, justice and fraternal charity. And, should they be elected to govern, this same undeviating concern for the common good will prevent them from favoring special interests to the detriment of the commonweal.

It need hardly be added that religion must not be used to bolster up any specific political ideology. Pope Leo XIII wrote: "But to sully the Church by party strife, or to desire to make her an ally in overcoming opponents in such strife, would be the work of men who rashly abuse religion" (*Sapientiae Christianae*).

The Church leaves her members free to belong to the parties of their choice, as long as the doctrines or methods of the parties are not opposed to their religious faith, as in the case with the Communist party. On the other hand, she calls upon Catholics of all political persuasions to forget their political differences and to unite whenever the issue at stake is a law necessary to safeguard public morals, Divine Law or some basic freedom such as the freedom of education.

### Education in Civics

What we have said concerning the demands made by citizenship should suffice to emphasize the need for continuing comprehensive and wide-spread education in civics. This need is nowhere more pressing than in our own developing country. The almost revolutionary changes brought about by Canada's industrial expansion have, in the brief space of fifty years, transformed us from a predominantly rural nation into one of large urban populations. The consequences of these rapid changes (which are far from ended yet) are evident. Even in the country life is no longer what it was, as the influence of city life increasingly makes itself felt.

In the gathering strength of their numerical growth, working men have used the trade union movement as a lever to compel recognition of their rights, and to better their condition. Economic expansion has multiplied the contacts between our two main ethnic groups while, at the same time, immigration has brought us people of many other races, all hopeful of finding opportunities to make a good livelihood for themselves in their new homeland. Those responsible for education have more and more directed and adapted it to the conditions and pressing needs of a changing economy, while striving to avoid the sacrifice of traditional cultural values.

By developing her immense resources, Canada has attained an enviable position among the nations. This does not mean, however, that she has yet achieved a social equilibrium of which we may be proud. Too many families are still deprived of adequate housing, and lack the minimum material resources needed for the rearing and education of their children. There has, moreover, been a noticeable weakening of moral standards among those who have benefited most from our general economic prosperity. This is doubly disquieting, for not only does it jeopardize the eternal destiny of the many individual souls concerned, but it also diminishes the spiritual and moral fabric of the nation.

It will be seen that our economic progress itself gives no guarantee of national well-being. If all our citizens are not imbued with that true sense of civic responsibility which makes them place the common good above their own interests, social peace and the balanced development of our nation cannot be achieved.

Because self-centeredness is the principal obstacle to the practice of citizenship, we cannot begin too early to combat it. Above all, it is in the home that children should first be led to experience the deep satisfaction of serving others. This training should be continued throughout the years of school, by using the opportunities provided in the teaching of, for instance, geography, history and religion to reinforce this natural truth. Our National Citizenship Day which will be held on May 17, 1957, is also a splendid occasion for us to recall the privileges and obligations inherent in our Canadian citizenship.

### **The Faith Ennobles Citizenship**

Far from being indifferent to citizenship, our Faith ennobles it by saturating it with the spirit of Christianity. It is the duty of those who preach to emphasize this truth by showing that the law of Christ must



rule every human activity. It is the function of Catholic Social Action to foster the growth of citizenship by developing a spirit of community between men.

However, the finest incentive to the proper accomplishment of civic duties should be the example set by those who govern. Their cardinal obligation is to acquire the competence and cultivate the virtues demanded by their state of life. No one has expressed this truth better than the Holy Father when, in 1950, he said to members of the Italian Parliament: "You realize—as everybody should realize—how much strength we need to receive from God, so that when exercising authority we shall remain firm in the fight against self-centeredness and pride, in order always to place the general good before the particular advantage of the individual, group or party, in order to act always from motives inspired by justice, charity and faith."

In view of these words of authority, need we speak further of the necessity for prayers for Divine help; help for all who wish to remain faithful to the teachings of Christ, both in the practice of citizenship and in the discharge of their own individual duties?



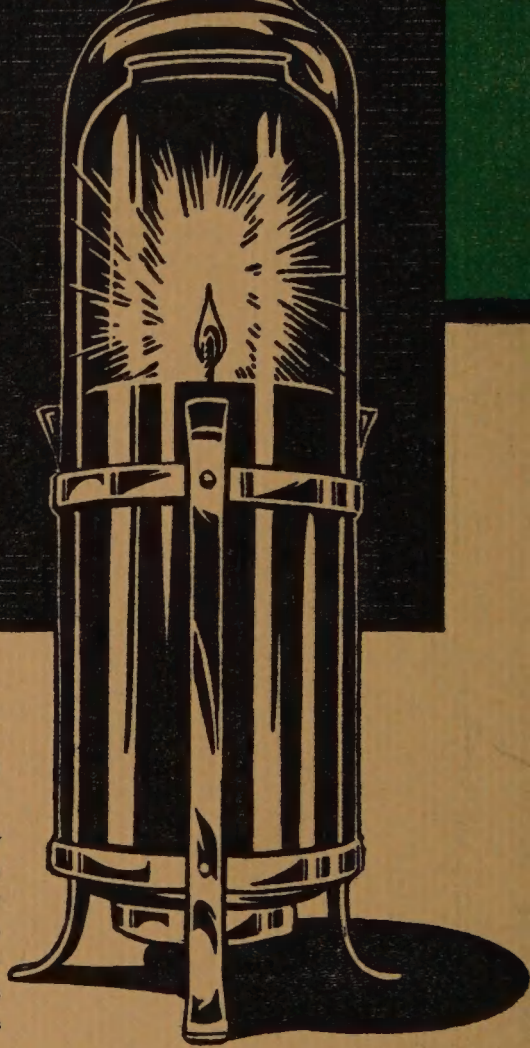
## The Pope's Christmas Message

The Holy Father doesn't give the pacifists much of a leg to stand on. He's hard too on the chauvinists and the go-it-alone nationalists, the appeasers, the advocates of peace-at-any-price, the take-it-all-on-faith proponents of disarmament, the we-can-explain-it-all-away friends of Red Russia, the lunatic fringe that would weaken or even scuttle the UN and which mouths such slogans as "Get the U.S. out of the UN and the UN out of the U.S.," the perfectionists who will have no truck with an organization which has any defects.

Few messages of the Pope have been more important or more suited to the needs of the time. We recommend that it be read and reread by all who have an interest in the solution of the enormous problems that beset us today.—*Ralph Gorman, C.P., in the SIGN, February, 1957.*







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